













**.POLITICAL INCIDENTS ·**

**OF**

**FIRST BURMESE WAR.**

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POLITICAL INCIDENTS  
OF THE  
FIRST BURMESE WAR.

BY  
THOMAS CAMPBELL ROBERTSON,  
DATE OF THE BENGAL CIVIL SERVICE

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## PREFACE.

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STEAM; amongst its other marvels, has accomplished that of changing the indifference of the British public into something like interest in the affairs of our Eastern Empire.

Twenty-seven years ago, a languid attention was all that could be awakened, even by the most lively narratives, to the events of the first Burmese War; *now*, the leading Journals of the day reserve a prominent place in their influential columns for intelligence from the banks of the Irrawaddy.

That war, however, was a most momentous event.

Its effect was not like that of all preceding wars, to assert our supremacy as the paramount

power in India, or what may be called Brahminical Asia, but to lay the foundation of another empire, destined apparently in its development to extend over the Indo-Chinese, or Buddhist nations of the East.

Though the part taken by the Author was but little known, yet his opportunities of observation were greater perhaps than fell to the lot of any other individual, as he was employed from the very commencement of the contest in a political capacity,—first with one expedition, and then with another, in the two countries of Arracan and Ava.

The Author has hitherto been deterred from recording any of his reminiscences in print, partly by the prevailing indifference on the subject, and partly by a conviction that the best thing every well-wisher to England, India, and Ava could do, was, to let the very existence of the latter State sink, if possible, into oblivion.

Both of these motives for silence have now lost their force, and therefore the following pages are offered to the public, in the hope that, if they fail to amuse, they may have some influence in arousing attention to the necessity of increasing the numerical strength of the European infantry, allotted to the defence of our Eastern possessions, so that it may keep pace with the progress of territorial extension.

T. C. ROBERTSON.

WILTON CRESCENT,  
*March 1853.*





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## PART I.—ARRACAN.

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MEETING WITH BURMESE ENVOYS ON THE NAF.—SEIZURE OF MESSRS. CHEW AND ROSS.—THEIR RELEASE.—INFORMATION BROUGHT BY MESSENGERS WHO WENT WITH A LETTER REGARDING THEM TO ARRACAN.—THE SAME DISCREDITED BY GOVERNMENT.—OPERATIONS ON THE FRONTIERS OF CHITTAGONG ORDERED AND STOPPED.—MUG COLONY IN CHITTAGONG.—JOSÉ FERNANDEZ.—RETURN TO TOWN OF CHITTAGONG.—ARRIVAL OF A VESSEL FROM RANGOON UNDER PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES.—BURMESE INVADE CHITTAGONG.—DESTROY CAPTAIN NOTON'S DETACHMENT AT RAMOO.—ALARM AT CHITTAGONG.—CRUISER SENT TO COX'S BAZAAR AND LED BY FERNANDEZ.—REINFORCEMENTS ARRIVE AT CHITTAGONG.—PREPARATIONS FOR CAMPAIGN. GENERAL MORRISON APPOINTED TO COMMAND.—CAPTAIN J. G. DRUMMOND, QUARTER-MASTER GENERAL.—MARCH FROM CHITTAGONG.—RAMOO REVISITED.—FLOTILLA OF 300 BOATS GREATLY CRIPPLED.—PASSAGE OF THE NAF.—MARCH TO THE MYOO.—DEATH OF MAJOR SCHÄLCH.—PASSAGE OF MYOO.—ADVANCE TO ARRACAN.—FIRST ATTACK REPULSED.—TOWN TAKEN.—TOWN DESCRIBED.—SICKNESS AND MORTALITY.—DISCONTENT AMONG BENGAL SEPOYS.—DEPARTURE FROM ARRACAN TO RAMREE.—PREPARE TO GO ON TO THE IRRAWADDY.—GENERAL SPECULATIONS ON THE PROGRESS OF THE WAR, AND ITS PROBABLE RESULTS.



POLITICAL INCIDENTS

OF

THE FIRST BURMESE WAR.

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WE cannot foretell what the future historian will say of the contest now in progress in the Irrawaddy, but it may be safely predicated of the last war with Ava, that it was not merely just and necessary in its origin, but absolutely and positively unavoidable. When that war commenced, the territories of the East India Company and those of the King of Ava touched at three points, and at each, under circumstances calculated to foster a barbarian monarch's insane estimate of his own comparative might.

The points of contact were at Goulpara, where the Burrumpooter issues from the valley of Assam into the plains of Bengal; in Kachar, to the east

of Sylhet, in the Dacca division of Bengal; and on the banks of the Naf, a large river, or rather arm of the sea, separating our district of Chittagong from the Burmese province of Arracan.

At each of these several points the climate is more or less unhealthy, and the country so covered with jungle and morass, as to be unfavourable to the local exhibition of our real powers.

What the Burmese saw of our military establishment,—namely, a few dismal detachments of our provincial sepoys, men recruited from among the adjacent population, and not from the more warlike races of Upper India,—was but little calculated to impress them with any just idea of our army's prowess. It also happened that in this contest with the Rajah of Assam they had seen some of his troops dressed and disciplined in a manner after the model of our sepoys; and were led to think lightly of the British uniform, by the ease with which they beat the first men clad in red whom they chanced to encounter.

Owing to the insalubrity of the climate, the

military force along the frontier was never more than what sufficed to protect the population of our own districts from the savage tribes inhabiting the hilly country which bounds Bengal on the east. With these tribes, indeed, the Burmese themselves were confounded in the minds of many of our own countrymen, and a rupture with either was regarded as an event of equal improbability and insignificance.

Meanwhile the Burmese kept pushing on, swallowing up the petty intermediate states, and thus removing every obstacle to a direct collision between their power and that of the British. Towards Arracan, on the banks of the Naf, there had long been, for a reason to be presently explained, a chronic misunderstanding; but it was not till the year 1823 that the Burmese, by establishing themselves on the northern frontier of Bengal, in the previously independent countries of Munnipore, of Kachar, and Assam, began to arouse the serious attention of our Government to their progress. It was, however, on the side where the Burmese had been long established that the most serious differences existed;



and to explain how these began and gradually swelled into a costly war, it is necessary to attempt to sketch the previous history of the country and people of Arracan. That country is a sort of wild and jungly Holland, being made up of islands intersected by branches of the sea, and cut off from Ava by the Yeomadong Mountains,—a range of such elevation that from some of its summits a view may at the same moment be obtained of the sea on one side, and the plains of the Irrawaddy on the other. Towards the north, Arracan runs into our district of Chittagong, in a manner to be more clearly understood from the Map than from any written description.

The Naf, being about three miles wide for the greater part of its course, would have formed an admirable boundary if its direction had been from the ocean towards the eastern mountains; but running as that estuary does, for about fifty miles from south to north, it reduces the southern extremity of Chittagong to a narrow tongue of land, and leaves at its head a wild tract, covered with jungle, through which it was always

found impossible to draw any distinct line of demarcation between our territory and that of the Burmese. Here disputes of difficult adjustment frequently arose between our people who were employed in catching wild elephants, and the local Burmese authorities; but the great grievance in the eyes of the latter, was the protection afforded by us to those natives of Arracan who towards the end of the last century had taken refuge, on their country being subdued, in our adjacent district of Chittagong.

These people, called Rukhengee by themselves, and Mugs by their neighbours in Bengal, are a race evidently of the same stock as the Burmese, to whom, in feature, character, and language, they are as like as the Portuguese are to the Spaniards. They assert themselves to have once ruled over the land, to the very confines of China; and it is evident, from the allusions to their country in some of the narratives of European navigators of former days, and from the refuge afforded in their territory to fugitives of the highest rank, from the vengeance of the ancient sovereigns of Hindostan, that their power

as a state must have once been far greater than it has ever appeared to be within our experience. It was about the year 1785 that the Burmese, for the first time, forcibly intermeddled with the domestic politics of Arracan, in consequence of a traitorous alliance between their Court and a Mug chief named Moßrussy Gæree, the father of King Berring, of whom we shall have more to say in the sequel.

In the course of this unequal contest the then reigning Rajah of Arracan, Shumiada, was killed in battle, and the husband of his sister, a chief named Keo Bang, was taken prisoner and put to death. A son of Keo Bang, named Hynja, then a boy of nine years old, was carried to Ava, and being, after five or six years' detention, set at liberty, he returned to Arracan, where he resided till about the year 1812. At that time great troubles, fraught with danger to one so closely connected with the old ruling family as Hynja, arose out of a series of attempts to shake off the Burmese yoke, originating in the patriotism or ambition of a chief named King Berring, whose father, as we have just stated,

was the person at whose instigation that power had, in the first instance, entered the country. Hynja withdrew from his native province, and settled with his family under the British protection in the village of Neela, in the district of Chittagong. Many of his countrymen had long ere this sought refuge in the same quarter, and thus a large colony of Mugs grew up in the southern parts of Chittagong, to the great disgust of the actual rulers of Arracan, who complained, and not without reason, of our harbouring within our territory men who, under King Berring and others, were constantly making incursions into a province become Burmese, as Chittagong had become British, by the right of conquest. These disputes led to occasional hostile demonstrations; and so far back as the year 1795 a Burmese force entered our territory, in pursuit, as they alleged, of fugitive rebels, and advanced to a place called Rutna Pullung, whence they were persuaded rather than compelled to withdraw.

The Mugs in Chittagong retained all the peculiarities of their own race, differing in feature,

in form, in language, and in religion, from our Hindoo subjects among whom they were settled. They did not generally congregate in very large masses, but were scattered over the face of the country in detached quarters of the several Bengalee villages to which they had annexed themselves. Though, not estranged from agricultural pursuits, their own more natural occupation was on the water, and they went forth annually at the end of the Monsoon in quest of employment as carriers of merchandise between the various towns and marts in Bengal. In this capacity their integrity was proverbial, and the manufacturers of Dacca would entrust the most costly cargo to their charge, with no assurance for its safety but the word of the owner or head man of the boat. One solitary instance was known of such a trust having been violated, and the name of the individual who brought this reproach on his tribe was held in horror among the Mugs, and never mentioned but with execration. The boats used by them in this carrying trade were of singular construction, of great length, and

sewn together with ligaments made of the fibres of the bamboo, and not fastened by nails. In these vessels they would sometimes, in fair weather, venture across the Bay of Bengal, and were at all times ready to navigate the inland seas of the Megna, or Lower Ganges.

The extraordinary disparity in point of strength and hardihood that prevails between this people and their contiguous neighbours of Bengal, seems to clash with the theory which traces varieties of national character to climate; though it might be possible to extract an argument, from the different habits of the two races, in support of other speculations as to the influence of food on the moral constitution of mankind.

The Mugs are as reckless as their Bengalee neighbours are scrupulous about what they put into their mouths, and indeed, as a Moosulman officer once remarked, "they will eat everything that stands on four legs except a bedstead." It is easy to imagine the jarrings consequent upon the location of a large expatriated colony of such men as these within our territory, but on the very verge of their original country; and

we cannot wonder at the Burmese having often construed our protection of the whole tribe, and apparent connivance at the aggressive operations continually in progress among them, into proofs of a spirit of hostility towards themselves. The truth is, that our civil officers at Chittagong, and most of their native subordinates, knowing nothing of the language of the Mugs, were hardly aware either of their designs or movements, and that the local police authorities were not equal to the control of men so far more energetic than themselves.

The Mugs also were, in general, very orderly and well-behaved in their demeanour towards those among whom they lived, and in consequence were left at the more freedom to harass the actual rulers of the land from which they had been expelled. The arrival among them of Hynja, the chief already mentioned as a descendant of the old Rajahs of Arracan, seems to have given a degree of unity to their schemes, and to have quickened the alarms of the Burmese, at the position they were allowed to occupy under our protection. A violent exhibition of this feel-

ing occurred about the year 1818, when a letter of insolent and furious remonstrance was addressed by the Viceroy of Pegu to the Supreme Government of India. This hyperbolical missive, which at another time might have formed a *casus belli*, happily reached India when the late Marquis of Hastings was in the middle of the successes of the Pindarry campaign. It is edifying to observe, how that gallant nobleman resented this outrage on the dignity of the British Government.

He put the original letter under a cover, and sent it back either to the Viceroy himself, or to the King his master, with a short note, stating that it was sent to let those personages see of what insolent forgeries some evil-minded foes to the public peace could be guilty; and nothing more was said at the time on the subject.

But the Burmese, as has been observed at the commencement, continued to advance towards our frontier on other quarters; and in the year 1823, emboldened by the conquest of the petty states of Munnipore and Kachar, to the east of Sylhet, and the whole country of Assam on the Burrumpooter, began to assume a more haughty



and offensive tone towards us, on the side of Arracan and Chittagong. "

They even made a partial inroad into the latter district, where they created a great deal of confusion and consternation. The ostensible matter of dispute in this quarter, was the limit of our elephant hunting-grounds at the head of the Naf, many of the people employed by our agents in this pursuit having been seized as trespassers, and maltreated by the local Burmese authorities in Arracan.

There was also another misunderstanding about the right to Shahpooree, a little island, or rather sand-bank, at the southern extremity of the long tongue of land, running between the sea and the Naf, in which the district of Chittagong terminates. But in point of fact, these disputes were merely got up to cover the vaster designs of war and invasion, then beginning to be seriously entertained by the Court of Ava, at the instigation of Mulia Buhdoola, the only one of the Burmese chiefs who ever gave any proofs of possessing talent, or military spirit. He had just achieved the subjugation of Assam, where

his barbarity had exceeded the ordinary bounds of even Asiatic cruelty, and, elated with his victory over some of the imitation sepoy of the unfortunate Rajah of that luckless province, he was generally believed to have urged the Court of Ava to attempt the invasion and conquest of Bengal.

With this ulterior object *in petto*, the Burmese authorities on the frontier were evidently instructed to assume a haughtier tone in their communications with our local officers, whose reports of existing alarm and apprehended danger, perplexed and provoked their superiors in the Council-Chamber at Calcutta. The gentleman who was then the Magistrate of Chittagong having requested to be relieved, and I happening at the moment to have come down on leave from Cawnpore, in Upper India, the Government directed me to assume the temporary charge of that office. I accordingly made the best of my way to my new post, and soon after moved down to the camp at Cox's Bazaar, on the sea-coast, about sixty miles to the southward of the town of Chittagong, where I found Colonel

Shapland commanding the troops on the frontier. In company with that officer, I then proceeded by sea about fifty miles further south, to Tek Naf, a village on the eastern shore of the tongue of land so often before described, and immediately facing the Burmese post of Mungdow, on the side of the Naf, which is there about three miles in breadth.

The first thing to be done, was to withdraw a detachment which had been stationed on the island of Shahpooree, on a spot of such deadly insalubrity, that its long retention was impossible, while its abandonment might be rendered awkward, by a demand for its evacuation being received from the Burmese as a preliminary to any negotiation. The young officer commanding the detachment died of a malignant fever on the very day of its being withdrawn, a sufficient proof of the necessity of the measure adopted.

The next matter to be thought of, was the opening of a correspondence with the Burmese rulers in Arracan. This was no easy task ; for among all classes on our side of the Naf, European and native alike, excepting the Mugs,

whom we did not then know how far to trust, the profoundest ignorance prevailed regarding all that related to the opposite shore. The language also presented another difficulty, for although an elementary treatise on the Burmese grammar was soon afterwards published by Mr. Hough, a missionary, yet at the commencement of our operations nothing of the kind was known to exist.\* A letter to the Burmese chiefs had to pass through the following process :—It was first written in Persian, and then explained in Bengalee to a Mug Moonshee, who rendered it into Burmese. It may easily be conceived how little epistolary eloquence could, under such circumstances, contribute towards the settlement of the differences we had to adjust.

However, the first note thus composed, produced the desired effect of bringing over a deputation of Burmese officers, empowered, by the Governor of Arracan, to confer with us on the pending disputes about the boundary line at

\* In returning to England, in the year 1827, I met the celebrated Mezzofanti at Bologna, and he showed me a Latin Grammar of the Burmese language, printed at Rome about 1750.

the head of the Naf, and the right to the possession of the island of Shahpooree. The conference took place in a large tent, and lasted for several hours during two successive days. On the second day, the Burmese envoys conducted themselves with tolerable decorum; but at our first meeting, an explosion of barbaric temper was brought about in rather a singular but simple manner. As they are very fond of European beverages, the servants were directed to hand round beer to them on a tray; but the domestics improved upon the directions issued, by adding a bottle of brandy to the refreshments. Upon this unhappy bottle one of the envoys seized, and pouring out at least as much as half a tumbler, drank it off at a draught. His brother diplomatists quickly followed his example; and the result was such a degree of noisy excitement, that the officer in command of the escort thought it prudent to double the sentinels all round the tent of conference.

In the middle of this uproar, a copy of an intended letter of remonstrance to the Governor of Arracan, on the conduct of his subordinates

towards our wild elephant-hunters, was handed round for inspection. In this our Burmese translator had, probably, introduced some expressions that seemed to fall short of the respect due to so august a personage, for the whole party flared up at once, all talking together, and looking hideously ferocious, with the red saliva of the pawn and betel, which they are always chewing, discolouring the large lips of their wide and ill-formed mouths. With some difficulty they were got out of the tent, and embarked in their boats to return to their own station of Mungdow, on the opposite side of the Naf.

At the next interview, their demeanour was more becoming, and they even appeared a little ashamed of their extravagant conduct on the preceding day. Little progress was made towards any adjustment of the points in dispute. They seemed, indeed, disposed to agree to let the island of Shahpooree remain unoccupied by either nation,—supposing the two Governments to agree to such a compromise; but on the subject of the boundary line, they would not even talk with any semblance of moderation.

“Our King knows the extent of his own dominion, and no one can set limits to it but himself.” This was the substance of their reply to all that could be said to them on that subject.

Though a thick veil still hung over the real designs of the Court of Ava, and the whole constitution and working of their system of government and policy was as yet but very imperfectly understood, still enough became manifest from this first formal conference, to show that the authorities in Calcutta had formed no adequate estimate of the resources and character of the power with which a misunderstanding had arisen, or of the chances of this leading to a speedy and serious collision.

One single battalion of Bengal sepoys, the 1st of the old 13th, a noble body of men, but fearfully weakened by the effects of climate, with two small vessels, one a pilot brig, and the other a sloop of war, belonging to what was then called the Bombay Marine,—these constituted the whole armed force at hand, to support a negotiation to be carried on, at a wild spot,

removed at least 500 miles from the reach of succour or support.

It was abundantly evident that war was coming on in real earnest, but it was equally clear that this contingency had been little contemplated; and therefore sound policy required that time should be gained for our Government to collect itself for the approaching struggle. With this immediate end in view, it was thought wise to receive as satisfactory the vague denials of all hostile intention, which alone could at the moment be obtained from the Burmese envoys, and to abstain, as far as possible, from any act of offensive demonstration on our own side.

A few days after the conference, the Burmese flag was surreptitiously stuck up on the island of Shahpooree by some agent, who must have stolen over under cover of night; but with the exception of this childish exploit, no attempt was made to infringe the neutrality of that sandbank.

The party at Tek Naf dispersed; Colonel Shapland returning by sea to the head-quarters of his regiment at Cox's Bazaar, and I proceeding



up the Naf in company with Captain (now Sir John) Cheape, who was engaged in a survey of the boundary. Though he scrupulously confined himself to the business of his own department, I derived the greatest assistance and comfort from the society of so resolute and clear-headed a companion as this now distinguished officer, at a juncture of difficulty and importance.

We had not gone far on our way up the Naf when a messenger overtook us, with intelligence which gave a more decided promise of speedy hostilities than anything that had yet occurred. Two of the officers of the pilot brig, stationed in the Naf, named Chew and Ross, having been induced to land by an invitation to a feast, had been treacherously seized by the chief Burmese officer at Mungdow, and sent as captives to Arracan. A letter was immediately addressed to the Governor of that province, beseeching him to respect the rights of hospitality, and not to detain the individuals, who would never have trespassed upon the Burmese territory if they had not been enticed over by a treacherous

invitation. The affair was an unpleasant one at the time, but it afforded an opportunity for sending as a letter-carrier an intelligent messenger to Arracan. This was no slight advantage, for the profoundest ignorance prevailed, even among us on the frontier, of all that was going on at that place. Such strict secrecy can only be commanded by a truculent despotism, one which menaces the communication of intelligence to strangers with torture and death, and inflicts what it threatens without hesitation or remorse. Of all the states within the circle of European diplomacy, Russia alone attains to anything like a similar degree of concealment, and thus exhibits one of the most striking proofs of her semi-oriental character.

It was not easy to select such a person as was required to be the bearer of the despatch to Arracan. No trustworthy member of the Mug tribe settled on our side of the frontier could venture to carry a letter of remonstrance to a Burmese chief, and no Bengalee official could discharge, as was desired, the double duty of letter-carrier and intelligencer.

At last an individual possessing the desired qualifications presented himself in the person of a Havildar, or serjeant of the Chittagong provincial battalion, a man who, though born in Bengal, was of upper Indian extraction. Laying aside his uniform and every other mark of his military profession, the Havildar, whose shrewdness had already attracted notice, started on his mission for Arracan, replying to the parting instructions addressed to him with a cunning look, and an assurance that, like Captain Daigetty, when sent on a somewhat similar errand, he would be more than *un peu clair-voyant*. Having despatched this messenger, Captain Cheape and I pursued our course by water to the head of the Naf, and there landing, made our way through the jungle to Ramoo, a village situated at about ten miles inland to the east of Cox's Bazaar, on the bank of a small tidal river, that falls into the sea at the last-mentioned place. It was then about the middle of February, 1824, and within about six weeks of the end of the short season of comparative salubrity in that unhealthy quarter.

The whole regular force on the frontier consisted of one battalion of the 13th Bengal Native Infantry, a very fine corps, but dreadfully weakened by sickness. Another battalion was said to be on the way, but the time of its arrival was uncertain.

It thus happened that one regular battalion, supported by a small detail of European artillerymen, with a couple of field guns and a few provincials, constituted the whole available force on the frontier, when the Havildar returned, bringing the satisfactory intelligence of Messrs. Chew and Ross's liberation, but at the same time communicating the following items of rather startling news. The ordinary Governor of Arracan had been superseded by a General named Mulia Bundoòla, who, though then unknown to us, had risen to great fame in Ava by the conquest of the country of Assam.

This personage had behaved like a gentleman in the matter of the two captive pilots, for he ordered them to be set at liberty, and offered, if they wished it, to have the officious functionary by whom they had been invited on

shore and seized, beheaded in their presence. This satisfaction Messrs. Chew and Ross declined, yet they admitted that the Bundoola, as he must be hereafter styled, had done all in his power to atone for what they had suffered at the hands of the petty official at Mungdow. But notwithstanding this display of courtesy, it was evident from other parts of the Havildar's narrative, that the Bundoola was busily engaged in military preparations, evidently preliminary to an invasion of our territory. Indeed, it was obvious that a man of his character and importance would not have accepted the Government of Arracan, except to make that province the base of more extended operations.

The Havildar further assured me, that he had placed himself in a position to observe narrowly the march into Arracan of a body of troops from Ava, and that its number, he was certain, did not fall short of 10,000 men; while he had understood from people with whom he conversed, that the arrival of two other divisions, each of the same numerical strength, was expected in a week or two. On the whole, he felt confident

that the Bundoola had, or was about to have, a force of 30,000 men under his command, and the general belief, in which he shared, was, that the army was destined for the immediate invasion of Chittagong. I confess that I felt perplexed in the extreme by this intelligence, the truth of which I saw no reason for doubting, excepting that it was so totally at variance with all that I had been told in Calcutta by those magnates, for whose opinion a novice in the political department like myself, naturally felt a profound deference.

When forwarded to Calcutta, the above news met with the very reception that might have been predicted. If I was not positively scolded for troubling Government with silly tales, I was gently admonished to beware of putting too much faith in the reports of my messengers; while it was added, in order to cheer us under our rumoured dangers, that with the addition of the battalion then on its way to our camp, it was thought that Colonel Shapland would have force sufficient not merely to defend the frontier, but even to "strike a blow" (these were the

very words, I remember them well) at the enemy, before the season closed.

The receipt of these orders placed Colonel Shapland in a most embarrassing situation. An expectation was expressed by Government of his doing that which he could not even attempt, without the risk of almost certain destruction.

He was urged to write to head-quarters himself, specifying the reinforcements necessary, in his opinion, to enable him to accomplish what the Government desired. From this he shrank, simply through fear of the responsibility that would then attach to him for the issue of whatever might be undertaken.

In this instance was exemplified, what I have often since had occasion to observe, that ten men willing to expose their persons to danger, may be found more easily than one who will run the risk of incurring blame.

The orders of Government were duly communicated to Colonel Shapland, and as a first step towards carrying them into execution, the little force at Ramoo was removed to Cox's Bazaar, on the coast, whence it would be more

easy to move down to Tek Naf, preparatory to an attack on the enemy's outpost at Mungdow.

I never shall forget that morning's march. Something having detained me at Ramoo, I did not quit the ground till about an hour after the rear-guard had moved off. I then mounted my horse, and very soon overtook the stragglers, who, like a long-drawn thread, stretched out from the little knot of men constituting the effective strength of the gallant 13th, and certainly not exceeding 200 men, who had then nearly completed their march of only ten miles.

Nothing could be better than the conduct of that regiment; every man who could crawl turned out of hospital and tried to shoulder his musket; but it was sad to see them tottering along, with shrunken frames, and faces of that yellowish tinge so common among natives of Upper India, when suffering from the climate of Bengal. .

At Cox's Bazaar we received despatches, telling us that the promised battalion could not be spared, but that we should be reinforced from some other quarter. These tidings created great



indignation among the young and ardent officers of the detachment, though, in fact, they owed their preservation to their disappointment; for the addition of another single battalion would not have made Colonel Shapland's force equal to what was expected of it, while its non-arrival justified the postponement of all thoughts of aggressive operations.

It was now about the beginning of March, and symptoms of the change of season, and approach of the monsoon, became daily more perceptible. Though we soon afterwards received the expected reinforcement of one battalion, the Government, having in the interim decided on the expedition to Rangoon, wisely recalled their injunctions for active doings on our side: still, it being manifest that our frontier could not remain unmolested amid the general disturbance of a regular war, I took advantage of this temporary lull to make myself better acquainted with the Mug colony, of whose services it was easy to foresee that we might eventually have much need. I accordingly proceeded on a tour of inspection through the Mug

villages, accompanied by a new acquaintance of the most singular and original character.

His name was José Fernandez, a native of Portugal, who in his boyhood had often accompanied his father in a boat, conveying provisions to Gibraltar during the celebrated siege. He came out to India as gunner in a ship, on board of which a former Governor of Madras was a passenger, and at his recommendation obtained employment as foreman to a ship-builder at Chittagong.

In the course of time the master died, and the foreman succeeding to his business, became well known as one of the best builders of small vessels in India. His trade prospered during the war; but in 1815, as he used himself to say, "Poor Buonaparte and I were both ruined by the same peace." But though he built no more ships, he had happily, like Marmontel, a little parcel of land upon which he lived, and to which he added; so that when the Burmese disturbances began, he was again a prosperous country gentleman on a small and unpretending scale. His age was a little short of sixty, yet

his hair was not whitened, but only grizzled; while his naturally dark complexion, deepened to almost positive blackness by exposure to a tropical sun, exhibited a firmness of fibre, which made it distinguishable at a glance from that of a country-born Portuguese of India. Upwards of six feet in height, and with a well-built and stalwart figure, he might, if of a sterner countenance, have sat for the picture of a buccaneer; but his benevolent expression, and the quick glances of his dark bright eye, betokened as much of good-humour as of shrewdness.

He was totally illiterate, and his power over the alphabet did not extend far beyond the inditing of his own name; yet, gifted by nature with great quickness of observation and a racy original humour, he seemed to be a very personification of the "*abnormis sapiens*" of Horace. His courage was so well known, that José Málum; (or José the Pilot,) as he was always called by the natives, was looked up to with respect and some degree of dread by Bengalees, Mugs, and Burmese. For the latter he had a sovereign contempt. "Oh, those Burmese!"

he used to say, "they fight with the mouth, that's all."

When first the disturbances began in the autumn of 1823, he, to quiet the minds of the people in the southern part of Chittagong, went down in a boat to the Naf, and rowed about for several days in front of the Burmese post at Mungdow. No better companion could I have had for such a tour; and we travelled about together for a couple of weeks,—lodging generally in boats, sometimes in cowsheds and huts.

In the course of our excursion, we saw all the chiefs of the Mug tribe; and my companion instructed me as to their several characters, and the peculiarities and disposition of the Mug race generally. His information proved to be in almost all points correct; his sole error being that of rather underrating the strength of the Burmese, who did not prove to be quite so feeble as his account, resting on what he had seen of them in Arracan, might have led one to suppose. .

In the course of this excursion, engagements were entered into with the various chiefs, fixing

the exact number of men to be produced by each of them for the public service, either as fighting-men or boat-men, and the precise amount of remuneration each chief was to receive. This was the only way of enlisting the Mugs, who would not at first engage individually or for periodical pay, but sold their services collectively, each village contracting for the campaign as for a job, promising for a specified sum to furnish its several quota.

In this manner the foundation was laid of that very useful corps, the Mug levy; which afterwards, when our army was nearly prostrated by pestilence in Arracan, rendered so much valuable service.

It was towards the end of March, 1824, that I returned to the Camp at Cox's Bazaar, there to remain for nearly a month. My time was passed very pleasantly among military friends, who, little aware of what fate had in store, only repined at the non-realization of the threats of immediate invasion, now daily reaching us through the Mug chiefs in our vicinity. That there was some foundation for these rumours I felt assured, but

having been instructed to disbelieve such reports, I did my best to obey. Having abundance of leisure, part of it was devoted to translating, with the aid of a Bengalee interpreter, a manuscript sketch of the history of his tribe, brought to me by a Mug priest.

This translation was given by me to Mr. Charles Paton, afterwards Deputy Commissioner in Arracan, and by him it was corrected, enlarged, and published in the Asiatic Researches, Volume XVI. This circumstance is trifling, but it is worth noting, because the accidental compliment thus paid to their national pride had no small effect in conciliating the whole tribe of Mugs; and it is well in these days to remind the rising members of the public service, that it is not through their material interests alone that a useful sway is to be exercised over the minds of our Asiatic subjects.

During this period of comparative repose, the military quotas were called in from the Mug villages, armed, accoutred, and placed under the command of an intelligent European officer, by whom they were gradually moulded into the

form of a well-drilled, though ill-dressed 'battalion. Great difficulty was at first found in telling them off into companies, from their reluctance to be placed under the immediate command of any but their own peculiar chief; but by a little management this was got over, and the rude levy was reduced to the form in which, with a few changes, it exists in the present day.

The particulars have escaped my memory, but I have a general recollection that the reports of approaching danger thickened to such an extent towards the end of April, that my superiors in Calcutta lost all patience with me, and hinted that perhaps I should be more usefully employed in attending to my judicial duties at Chittagong, than in sending up disagreeable rumours from the frontier.

Though at the bottom of my heart I felt that information coming through various channels must, from the consistency of one account with another, in all likelihood be true, still so strong was the deferential instinct within me at that period, that I stifled my own convictions, and proceeded to act upon those of my betters. I

accordingly withdrew to the town of Chittagong, situated, as has been already mentioned, at about sixty miles to the north of Cox's Bazaar and Ramoo. Colonel Shapland determined on quitting the frontier at the same time, and two or three companies of regulars, with a few provincials and the raw Mug levy, being left at Ramoo, the rest of the force was withdrawn to Chittagong. It was not intended to detain those left at Ramoo throughout the whole season in that notoriously unhealthy region, but the people of the lower part of the district were in such a state of alarm, that if the whole force had retired at once, the population would probably have fled.

The arrangement adopted was nevertheless open to many objections. The detachment left was just of that awkward strength to be alike unfit, if assailed in force, to stand with effect, or to retreat without discredit. But it was absolutely necessary, in order to save their lives, to withdraw the sepoys and their officers before the deadly season commenced, and, for the sake of the tranquillity of the district, it was judged expedient to



effect this by separate and progressive removes. It would have been far wiser to have avoided the division of a force already too small to meet any serious danger, and either to have all remained or all retired together, leaving, in the latter case, nothing more than a serjeant's or, at most, a subaltern's party as a look-out post on the frontier. But incredulity having been enjoined us as a duty, no one could avow, even to himself, a belief in impending danger ; and so a blunder was committed, under extenuating circumstances, in 1824, in Chittagong, which we have since seen repeated on a larger scale, and with less to excuse it, in 1841 in Afghanistan. '

Not many days after our return to Chittagong, and the resumption of the sober, but now somewhat insipid duties of my judicial office, a vessel entered the port under circumstances to confirm our belief in all that we had heard while on the frontier. There were only two Europeans on board, one the Skipper, the other a commercial passenger ; and they reported that they had with difficulty escaped from Rangoon, so scantily provided, that they had been obliged to

send on shore for a supply of water, when the mate and the boat's crew had been seized by the Burmese, and forwarded as prisoners to Ava. The commercial passenger added, that he had very recently quitted the Burmese capital, where nothing was talked of but the Bundoola's intended invasion of Chittagong, and that he himself had seen large bodies of men in progress to join that general in Arracan.

What reception this intelligence met with in Calcutta was never known: for but a few days after its despatch, the report arrived of a numerous Burmese army having entered our territory, and advanced to Rutna Pullung, about fifteen miles to the south of Ramoo, where Captain Noton's little division was posted.

It now became clear, that what we had been told to disbelieve was all true, and that Colonel Shapland had to contend, at the head of a small, yet divided, a motley and sickly force, against a numerous enemy of barbarians it is true, but of barbarians inured to the climate, which sapped the vital strength and vigour of the regulars, to support whom there were but a few puny

provincials, and the hardly formed Mug~~gy~~ levy. Under these circumstances, with the monsoon close at hand, for it was then the middle of May, the best course to have adopted would have been to order Captain Noton to retire, and to have advanced a little way from Chittagong to meet and bring him off; sacrificing the southern part of the district for awhile to an invader whom we had no means of resisting. Another good course would have been, to advance to his support with the small body of the 13th Native Infantry, then at Chittagong, not above three or four hundred strong; putting the ammunition on the few elephants at our command, and housing the men when they halted in the villages.

To make such an advance effective, it was most judiciously proposed, by the late Captain Webb, of the Bengal Artillery, to leave his guns behind, and to form of his thirty artillerymen, a little company of European infantry, to give confidence to the native part of the force.

Had either of these courses been followed, the disaster which ensued might have been averted; but, unhappily, a middle line was taken,—one

that neither left Captain Noton at liberty to retreat, nor yet provided for his speedy support. It was decided that the troops could not march without tents; and so the elephants being taken for camp equipage, it became necessary to have the ammunition carried by men pressed into the service for the purpose. •

Forty-eight valuable hours were thus lost in discussion and preparation, even after the receipt of a report of Captain Noton's position at Ramoo being beleaguered; and when at length the march began, it was retarded by the guns, which, contrary to the artillery officer's advice, it was determined to drag along with the infantry.

The reports from the police officers near the frontier, were calculated to create the greatest anxiety. One of these reports stated, that the English gentlemen at Ramoo were so beset by the enemy, that, "leaving eating and sleeping out of the question, they had no time to drink." The fact was, that the Burmese, with the very *élite* of whose army they had to cope, were in vast numbers,—some said fully 30,000 strong. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that they

were numerous enough, not merely to shut Captain Noton's force up within entrenchments, as at the siege of a fortress, but to man these lines with reliefs to keep up an incessant fire for nearly seventy-two hours, and so to wear out our poor men and officers by rendering all repose impossible.

For them, though posted on a river, there was "not a drop to drink," because the banks being very high, the enemy, by running an entrenchment along the opposite side, were enabled to keep up an incessant fire on the slope which our people had to descend to reach the tantalizing stream at their feet. It appeared afterwards, that Rang Jhang, a Mug chief of some note as a warrior, who went out to reconnoitre as far as Rutna Pullung, fifteen miles in advance, had, on his return, advised Captain Noton to contest the passage of the river with the Burmese, and if he failed, to retreat; for he said, if you let them get across, and you stay where you now are, "they will dig in the earth and become very dangerous." Free communication with the Mugs was at that time so very difficult, from the want

of good interpreters, that, most probably, Captain Noton never completely understood what this chief meant to explain of the then to us unknown Burmese mode of attack.

Had that gallant officer acted on the latter part of the chief's advice, and before his men were completely exhausted, sallied out and marched through the enemy's lines towards Chittagong, it is probable he would have made good his retreat, though not, of course, without loss ; but he thought himself bound to hold his post to the last ; and so the retreat not beginning till they were all broken down by want of sleep and fatigue, soon became a rout, in which he and five other officers perished, while only three effected their escape. In the meanwhile, the few troops from Chittagong, having, at the end of a day's march, accomplished the passage of a broad and deep river, were starting to pursue their journey through the night, when a messenger arrived with a pencil note from an officer in advance, announcing the catastrophe which had on the preceding day occurred at Ramoo. Directly afterwards, many of the country people came

running towards the detachment, saying that the Burmese were following in hot pursuit. The situation was embarrassing: a rapid and wide tidal stream was behind them, with only two moderate sized boats upon it, to ferry over both men and guns. It was growing dark, and the consternation among the country people was so general, that even the police officers took to their heels to avoid the supposed approaching destruction.

At this moment, the conduct of the men of the 13th was exactly what was to be expected from sepoys in whom the spirit of the good old Lake and Ochterlony days still survived. They only asked to be allowed to take off their knapsacks, and this being done, showed themselves quite prepared to meet calmly the foe then believed to be at hand. As the night went on, it was ascertained that the Burmese, contenting themselves with their triumph at Ramoo, had not as yet advanced further; but it was deemed expedient to recross the broad river on which the little detachment stood. Although the party did not consist of more than between

three and four hundred sepoy, with a few artillerymen, and two guns, the operation of ferrying them over in two moderate-sized boats was rather tedious, and occupied the whole of the night.

In the middle of the night an interruption took place, from a mischievous act on the part of the boatmen, for which it was difficult to account. They suddenly decamped, carrying away with them the oars, and so rendered the boats quite useless. Captain Webb, of the artillery, went with another officer to the house of a neighbouring land-holder, the owner of the boat, and after dragging him out from the depths of his female apartments, required him to have the oars replaced. The Bengalee country gentleman at first denied that he knew anything about either the oars or the boatmen. When threatened with military execution if he did not produce what was wanted, he at first laughed at the menace; but when a sepoy went through the motions as if loading his musket, the party threatened asked leave to call aloud for his brother; and on this being granted, he raised a



shrill cry, to which a response was made from the court-yard of a neighbouring house; and in a few minutes, the oars and the men to use them were both forthcoming. It was quite impossible to assign any motive for this extraordinary conduct. Some were disposed to impute it to treachery,—but for that there were no reasonable grounds; and probably a mere desire to escape from a very troublesome job, was the simple motive for doing what, if the enemy had come up, might have caused the destruction of the little detachment.

The crossing, thus retarded, was not completed before the middle of the next day; in the course of which, many stragglers, some of them wounded, arrived from the scene of the recent disaster. Towards evening, the retreating party reached the town of Chittagong, and doubtless rejoiced that their re-entry was covered by the shades of night. Next morning the town exhibited a curious appearance. It was literally empty. Men, women, and children, all had fled, with the exception of one Hindoo family of considerable weight in the district, called the

Chowdrees, who remained, and were of the greatest service in procuring supplies of every kind for all classes. The ladies at the station had been sent away to Dacca at the first tidings of the invasion.

As it seemed improbable that the Burmese could have entered our provinces with so large a force merely to attack a single detachment, it was reasonable to expect their advance to Chitagong, and consequently prudent to make provision against such a contingency. The force at that station was numerically weaker than that lately defeated at Ramoo; and there being no steam in those days to shorten space, no reinforcement could be looked for in less than a fortnight or three weeks. It was accordingly determined to collect all the force at one point; and the place selected to be thus converted into a temporary fortress, was the house occupied by myself, which stood upon a hill considered well adapted for defence.

When the alarms subsided, and it was seen that the Burmese still halted at Ramoo, the good people in Calcutta, who had themselves been

much fluttered without any shadow of a cause, were very facetious at the expense of the party at Chittagong, whose situation would have been one of real peril but for a circumstance which, unknown to them at the time, had arrested the otherwise certain advance of the foe. This circumstance was the landing on the island of Cheduba, (one of the divisions of Arracan,) of a party under Colonel McCreagh, of H. M.'s 13th, who had been detached for this purpose from the expedition then in progress to Rangoon.

The Bundoola, not considering the attack on our post at Ramoo to be of sufficient importance to call for his presence, had remained at Arracan, most probably to organize his means for the more extensive operations contemplated. The news of the success achieved by his lieutenants at Ramoo, and that of the occupation of Cheduba, must thus have reached him so nearly at the same moment, as to make the one neutralize the other, and thus stagger the disposition he probably felt to follow up his first success by a further forward movement.

Immediately afterwards he must have heard of Sir Archibald Campbell's appearance at Rangoon, and this, even if he did not receive any orders to that effect from his Court, as he most probably did, could not but operate to detain him for awhile where he was. To this cause must the escape of Chittagong, in my opinion, be mainly ascribed; and indeed the expedition to Rangoon was well-timed to save not only that district, but the whole eastern division of Bengal, from invasion and devastation.

The Burmese forces were admirably posted at the time for a raid on a large scale. Had the Bundoola advanced from Ramoo, destroying or else masking the small force at Chittagong, he might have reached Dacca on one side, while the Burmese in Assam, descending the Burrumpooter, approached it on the other side; and both uniting might have overwhelmed or held in check the single weak battalion in that city, and then, as troops advanced from Calcutta to attack them, might have retreated back into their own territory through the district of Sylhet and the recently conquered provinces of Kachar

and Munnipore. Something of this sort would, it seems very likely, have been attempted but for that expedition, which it is so much the fashion to speak of as ill-timed.

In due season reinforcements were sent to Chittagong, and early in June all anxiety about its safety was removed by the arrival of H. M.'s 44th Regiment, under Major Carter.

The Burmese, however, still remained at Ramoo, and evinced no intention of decamping. On the contrary, they constructed an immense stockade, and filled it with comfortable and neatly finished buildings of wood and bamboo. As the river interfered with their arrangements, they diverted its course by digging for it a new channel of several hundred yards in length. They treated the country people kindly, and encouraged them to cultivate their lands by giving them leases and taking engagements for the payment of rent. Frequent letters passed between myself and their chiefs on the subject of the prisoners taken at Ramoo, of whom there were many native, and we did not know but that there might have been some European.

There was an advantage in keeping up this correspondence, as we were thus enabled to send messengers to observe and report what was going on. It was galling certainly to communicate, even by letter, with an insolent foe, settled on our own soil; but what was to be done? for of all power of action we were bereft by the rains, which had set in on the 26th of May, with a violence only to be conceived by multiplying fourfold in imagination the streams which have recently been poured down upon London. Of dry land there was hardly a visible particle left in the plains; and as whatever operation is attempted at any season in that region must ever be more than half aquatic, it was thought right, in order to secure the means of future movement, to collect all the boats that could be found.

Here my old friend José Fernández again came into play. When first we met after the disaster at Ramoo, his complimentary exclamation was, "Ah, Sir, I always thought that you would bungle this business." An armed cruiser happened to be then in the river at

Chittagong, and it was thought desirable that this vessel should be despatched by an inner channel to Cox's Bazaar, there to station itself as a check upon the enemy, and a protection to the inhabitants of the large islands of Mascal and Kootubdia, and to those who might seek refuge within their limits. Many were the nautical objections made to this movement, but these were all met by Fernandez, who said, "Give me a boat, and I will lead them through the channel." A boat, manned by Mugs, was accordingly placed at his disposal, and the little frigate, for such the cruiser was, following its guidance, reached Cox's Bazaar in safety. As they drew near, it was perceived that the Burmese had already constructed a stockade on the spot, which, it may be remembered, is only ten miles distant from Ramoo. A party from this stockade came down to the water's edge, and began to fire at the boat, which was some way ahead of the cruiser. Fernandez immediately made his men pull closer in towards shore; and singling out the leader of the hostile party, shot him dead, and then returned to the cruiser.

At night he proposed to the officer in command, to land with his crew of English sailors, to attack the stockade, and thus alarm the enemy at Ramoo, and deter him from moving towards Chittagong; but the commander of the vessel did not think himself warranted to attempt this enterprise. Fernandez remained at Cox's Bazaar and in its vicinity, until the arrival at Chittagong of reinforcements from Calcutta had removed every apprehension of the enemy's advancing beyond Ramoo. He then returned to us, and was from that time engaged in superintending the repairs of boats of every class likely to be required when the season for active hostilities should return.

A large proportion of the inhabitants of the southern parts of the district, including the greater portion of the Mug colony, had by this time sought shelter at Chittagong. The Mug levy also, whose conduct at Ramoo had been creditable, when their rawness and little training is considered, all repaired to the same place; and in many instances, the arms and accoutrements of those who had fallen in the



fight, were brought in and delivered back by their widows. The corps was soon re-embodied, and with increased efficiency, under Captain Dickenson. A circumstance some time afterwards occurred, which may here be related as setting the better points of the character of the tribe in a strong light. Five or six hundred of their number were engaged to proceed by sea to Rangoon, there to serve as boatmen with Sir A. Campbell's army. One condition of the engagement was, that they should severally receive thirty-five rupees, which sum was accordingly paid down to each man of the party. Some delay arose in preparing a ship for their conveyance, and in the interim they all changed their minds, and sought to be released from their engagement. They came often with the money in their hands, imploring that it might be taken back; but on this being steadily refused, kept to their promise, and at last embarked for Rangoon, where their services proved most useful. One single man deserted, and for him his chief provided a substitute at his own expense.

In the course of the month of June, Colonel Morrison, of H. M.'s 44th Foot, was appointed, with the local rank of Brigadier-General, to command the whole force on the South-Eastern frontier. The General reached Chittagong about the beginning of July, and that station which had recently been a solitude, now glittered with uniforms, and became alive with preparations for future campaigns, and arrangements for immediate amusement. At this time the presence of Sir A. Campbell at Rangoon had completely taken off the hostile pressure on our own provinces. First, the Bundoola himself had been recalled from Arracan; then, in the month of August, the stockade at Ramoo was evacuated, and its garrison, which, as the destined advanced guard of an invading force, probably consisted of the best men in the Burmese ranks, was marched through Arracan across the Yeomadong range, to contend against the English commander on the Irrawaddy.

Troops now began to drop in from every quarter. H. M.'s 54th, and a brigade of Native Infantry, came across the bay from Madras,

while several battalions of Regular Sepoys, and Gardener's Irregular Horse, were known to be approaching from the north. It soon became apparent that we were likely to have more than enough, for the mere fighting part of the work, and that it was to the feeding, the moving, and the ultimate destination of the large force assembling at Chittagong, that the most earnest timely attention ought to be directed. From my first interview with the Burmese envoys at Tek Naf, in January 1824, I had clearly perceived that Arracan would probably become the scene of offensive operations on our part; and my inquiries having satisfied me as to the little we should gain by marching a large army into that province, excepting with the design of thence penetrating into Ava, I had taken some pains to collect information regarding the routes across the Yeomadong mountains, especially that one since become so well known by the name of the Aing Pass.

Of this route, the following was the most minute of the many descriptions received; and it was furnished by a travelling Mug merchant, of the name of Koolaree.

“ I left Cox’s Bazaar towards the end of the month of Assun, or middle of October last, and after stopping at Arracan for ten days, proceeded by water to Aing, which place I reached in four days. My party consisted of forty men from Cox’s Bazaar, and sixty whom I brought with me from Arracan. We carried with us bales of cloth for sale, as well as our provision for the journey. The following is a descriptive list of the stages.

“ *1st day.*—For the distance of about two miles from Aing, the road runs through a thick jungle, but over level ground, to a small fordable nulla, after which the ascent commences. It is not very steep, but too much so in the describer’s opinion for wheeled carriages, though passable for elephants, horses, and cattle. The road is from twenty to thirty feet wide. Frequent ascents and descents are met with during this march, and many little streamlets, but no large nulla. The march terminates by evening at a place called Toorooa, where there is a Chokee for the collection of duties, with five men attached to it, but no village of habitation near. The

while several battalions of Regular Sepoys, and Gardener's Irregular Horse, were known to be approaching from the north. It soon became apparent that we were likely to have more than enough, for the mere fighting part of the work, and that it was to the feeding, the moving, and the ultimate destination of the large force assembling at Chittagong, that the most earnest timely attention ought to be directed. From my first interview with the Burmese envoys at Tek Naf, in January 1824, I had clearly perceived that Arracan would probably become the scene of offensive operations on our part; and my inquiries having satisfied me as to the little we should gain by marching a large army into that province, excepting with the design of thence penetrating into Ava, I had taken some pains to collect information regarding the routes across the Yeomadong mountains, especially that one since become so well known by the name of the Aing Pass.

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country on both sides of the road is covered with thick jungle.

“ *2d day.*—The march lasts till nearly evening, over a country similar to that of the preceding stage, to a halting-place, where there is no village or habitation, called Wudda.

“ *3d day.*—This stage terminates at the foot of a high range of mountains, called Yeomatong. There is no village near the halting-place.

“ *4th day.*—In this stage the road is very good and passable for elephants, but steep; it being over the Yeomadong range of hills, on the opposite side of which is the halting-place, on a spot totally uninhabited, on the bank of a little fordable nulla, which has no particular name.

“ *5th day.*—This stage is over level ground through light jungle; there are no large nullas, and hardly any streams, but plenty of drinking water is to be found in the little tanks or pools. It terminates at a small town, Nafei Mreo, in which there are between two and three hundred dwelling-houses, but no stockade or fortification of any kind. There is only one little village near the town.

“ *6th day.*—In this march the road is level, with little hills and scattered jungle on both sides, but neither habitations or cultivated land. It concludes by noon at a village containing about forty houses, called Hree-Cha-Tou, or Chatorah : there is no large nulla all the way.

“ *7th day.*—This march is over a plain and level, cultivated, and well-inhabited country. There are many little nullas to be crossed, but they are all shallow and fordable. It ends by evening at Juggow-Mreo, a large village.

“ *8th day.*—This stage is through a country like the previous march, and ends by noon at a town on the Irrawaddy river, called Mung-foo-Mreo.

“ *9th day.*—The road runs during this stage through a cultivated country, with no intervening river or nulla, and ends by evening at Chung-froo-Keine, (corruptly, Sembew Gheone;) whence the party proceeded by water to Ava, through an open, cultivated, and well-peopled country, in eleven days.”

This description was transmitted to Government on the 30th July, 1824, and along with it



there went up equally detailed accounts of a practicable, but more difficult pass, leading from Talak to the Irrawaddy in eleven stages; and of a third, shorter but far more rugged route, by which an active man on foot might go from Arracan to a point higher up the river, and much nearer to Ava, in a week. "

A fourth route, leading from Sandoway in the south, to Prome, in five marches, was reported on the 4th August, 1824.

These descriptions afterwards proved to be correct by the explorations of Captain Trant, Captain Pemberton, and others; and, known at the time to be so by our Quartermaster-General and myself, formed the basis of all the schemes on which we often conferred together, and sometimes ventured to communicate with our new commander. His first start was not promising. On being told what had been done, by collecting and repairing boats to help him over the greatest obstacle in his way, namely, the large rivers or arms of the sea dividing Arracan into islands, he drily replied, by telling us what Polybius has recorded of Alexander's substitutes for modern pontoons.

But it was not by contrivances adapted to inland and waveless streams that an army, with all of its "impedimenta," could be carried over the broad tidal estuaries that lay across our destined path; and therefore the authority of José Fernandez being preferred to that even of Polybius, the old shipwright was encouraged to pursue in his boat-yard the work judged by himself to be most conducive to the ultimate success of the expedition.

So well did he perform his task of fitting up and repairing every floating thing secured by the police for the public service, that before the season for active movement opened, a flotilla was created of three hundred large boats, averaging seventy feet in length, such as, manned with Mug boatmen, might, if turned to good account, have prevented the approaching campaign from ending in the charnel-house of Arracan.

It was while these preparations were in progress that the late Colonel Drummond, afterwards Quartermaster-General of the Bengal army, and then a Captain, joined the army at

Chittagong, in the capacity of Deputy Quarter-master-General of the Forces on the south-eastern frontier. The advantages resulting from this energetic and intelligent officer's presence were felt by all who had an active part to take in what was going on; and, for reasons not to be understood, perhaps, by any but my brother Indian officials, to whom they need not be explained, by no one so sensibly as by myself.

Captain Drummond soon perceived that it was only by making a road round the head of the Naf that it could be possible to escape the delay attending the passage of that river at Tek Naf, where there are three miles of water at flood, and two of water and one of mud at ebb tide. He also perceived that, to admit of this desirable work being begun upon, it was necessary to drive the Burmese from Mungdow, their advanced post on the Naf, because, while they were there, not a workman on our side could be induced to enter the jungles through which the road was to be carried. Though with our immense naval supe-

priority, this operation would apparently have been of the easiest execution, still this mode of clearing the way in advance was not approved of, and so the road round the head of the Naf was never made. In its stead, however, a superb highway was constructed through our own district from Chittagong to Ramoo, calculated to bring our army with all imaginable ease to the edge of its difficulties, but not to help it through them.

The year 1824 was now drawing to a close, and still the army lay at Chittagong, awaiting the arrival from Upper India of bullocks and camels for the transport of provisions. The season for active operations is in that part of India very brief; and that the whole of it might not be thus wasted in expectation, it was proposed to let the police authorities take the grain from the Commissariat, and convey it in boats to the different halting-places along the road, at each of which temporary store-houses were erected for its reception. This being acceded to, the army began its march towards the frontier either on the 1st January,

1825, or not many days after. That march was in itself a singular spectacle, carrying as it did an exhibition of much that is most imposing in military array, through a sequestered region, where the plains are occupied by a simple race, to whom the sight of a single man in uniform was a wonder; and the hills, through which the road in some parts ran, were covered with jungle, the haunt of wild animals and almost savage men. But it was also remarkable from its effect upon the generally apathetic Bengalee. Each morning, for hours before daylight, every vantage ground along the roadside was occupied by villagers, of both sexes and of every age, who sat gazing with mute wonder at the various soldiery filing past before their eyes.

There they saw the tall and comparatively fair men of the Bengal army, and the darker, dapper sepoy from Madras; the two royal regiments, the 44th and 54th, enabled the astonished villagers to see at a glance more white faces than they had previously believed the whole world to contain; the artillery, with the rumble of their wheels, probably filled them

with awe ; while of Gardiner's Irregular Horse they openly expressed their mysterious dread. Whether it was the beards and long lances of the troopers, or the extraordinary gesticulations of the man with the kettle-drums, who rode in front, that put the notion into their heads, is uncertain, but they positively did believe the men of that gallant corps to be cannibals.

Emboldened by the winning urbanity of Colonel Gardiner's manner, one of the upper class among the villagers ventured to question him on the subject. The Colonel replied, that "there was some truth in the rumour, but that the people of Chittagong need not fear ; for, while among them, his troopers would curb their cannibal propensities, and not indulge them till they got among the foe."

At last, the whole army was encamped on the plains of Ramoo, where the vestiges of the disaster in the preceding month of May were still to be distinctly traced. The trenches dug by the Burmese round Captain Noton's position had not been effaced by the dissolving influence of a rainy season of unusual violence ; and thus

an opportunity was afforded of observing how that singular people, when strong enough to venture on the plain, conduct a battle in the field on the principle of a siege. The stockade, also, erected during their occupation of Ramoo, was found to be an extraordinary structure. It was of vast extent, sufficient, to have held at least 10,000 men within its *enceinte*. It leant upon a hill, which also had been palisaded to serve as a citadel to retire to in extremity, or to prevent an enemy from getting possession of a position commanding the whole stockade. The houses for the superior officers were all finished with neatness, and even taste, the edges of the door, and window-frames and sills, being delicately moulded with a kind of plait-work, done with the finest fibres of the bamboo. They had, as has been already mentioned, diverted the course of a river which interfered with their arrangements; and to correct the dampness of the site, not only were the floors of the buildings raised, as is the custom of their country, to the height of five or six feet above the ground, but little platforms, supported on props, tra-

versed the stockade in every direction to serve as pathways. It was impossible to look at this curious structure without an involuntary abatement of our previous persuasion of the utter barbarism of the people by whose hands it had been run up in the short space of three months, and for a temporary purpose.

And now that we were assembled in resistless strength at Ramoo, one might have expected the saddening recollections connected with the locality to have been dissipated by triumphant anticipations; and such, perhaps, would have been the prevailing frame of mind, but for the daily growing perception, that the army would never get beyond Arracan, and that of those who might reach that pestilential town, not the half would ever come away.

It was then about the middle of January; and if a detachment had been sent to drive the Burmese from Mungdow, there might still have been time to make the road round the head of the Naf. This, however, was said to be superfluous, because the Naf could be crossed in three days; an assurance little confided in by



those who knew that river best. But the finishing blow was given to every hope of a more forward movement by the following untoward mistake. It may be seen, by a glance at the map, that a channel runs between the islands of Kootubdia and Mascal and the mainland from Chittagong to Cox's Bazaar. Through this channel the flotilla of large boats, turned out in the highest state of equipment by Fernandez, was sent down to Cox's Bazaar, manned for that distance by Bengalees, who could be trusted on those inland waters, though not in the open sea. The Mugs engaged for the latter navigation, and for subsequent service in Arracan, had to be called together from their several villages to relieve the Bengalees at Cox's Bazaar ; but before they reached that place, the troops had been suddenly embarked and sent off with only the Bengalee crews, to make the best of their way to Tek Naf. The consequence of this impatient movement was, that in the course of the night most of the Bengalee boatmen, frightened at the roughness of the sea, turned their prows towards the shore, and ran aground, when two hundred

of these large boats, collected with much trouble, and fitted up at no slight expense, were dashed to pieces by the surf.

In a few days after this unfortunate embarkation, which greatly crippled the expedition, the army was crowded together at Tek Naf, preparing for the attack of the Burmese advanced post at Mungdow, on the opposite shore. The river was covered with vessels of various classes, fluttering with flags and colours ; while the boats were drawn up in line near the shore, where officers and men stood waiting. The sight was an imposing one, even to the few who were aware that the place to be attacked had, some days before, been evacuated. The weary crossing of the wide estuary then began, not to end until, instead of the three promised days, six weeks had been consumed in the tedious process. When about half that time had gone by, the fighting men being nearly all assembled on the Burmese side of the Naf, General Morrison advanced with one division of his army to the Myoo, a still larger estuary, about fifty miles further south. The shattered flotilla, as the only

means of preserving it from total destruction, was again committed to the charge of Fernandez, who went round by sea with eighty boats—all that remained of the three hundred despatched from Chittagong, to meet the camp on the Myoo. This floating establishment contained many of the leading men among the Mugs, whose disgust at the treatment which they had to endure while serving as ferrymen was so strong, that, interested as they were in the progress of the expedition, they gave warning that they might be driven to desert. It was at this conjuncture of the first importance to keep them in a good humour, for, upon them and their countrymen in Arracan we now depended sometimes for food, sometimes for the means of moving, and at last entirely, as will be seen, for housing and shelter. I had, accordingly, remained at Mungdow for some days after the General's departure, for the purpose of inquiring into, and allaying the little discontents of our humble yet useful allies ; and was afterwards pursuing my way, by gentle stages, enjoying the tranquillity of the deserted region along

the shore of which I was following the track of the army in advance, when a note arrived from the head-quarters on the Myoo, to announce that they were starving, not figuratively, but literally; and that they had even been obliged to send parties into the jungle to shoot—not Burmese, but deer—to supply them with the means of immediate subsistence.

Upon the receipt of this intelligence, messengers were sent off with letters to the various Mug chiefs in the interior of Arracan, with whom a correspondence had long been established; and boats, laden with provisions, despatched by them, soon reached the camp on the Myoo. The following was the cause of the scarcity to which our troops were unexpectedly subjected.

Beside the flotilla of Mug boats, there had been formed at Chittagong a little fleet of about twenty sail of small coasting craft; vessels, probably, averaging about 150 tons burden. These vessels were laden with provisions and stores, and were under the charge of a son-in-law of Fernandez, named De Coil. It would have been better, perhaps, if this little fleet had been left

under separate management, but this was held to be irregular; and so, instead of entering the Myoo, these vessels, laden with the sustenance of the army, were carried away on a little episodic expedition, of which the following description is given in what may be called the official history of this and other recent wars.

“Commodore Hayes, with a division of the flotilla, having on board a company of H. M.’s 54th, and detachments of the 10th and 16th Madras Infantry, had entered the Arakan river towards the end of February, for the purpose of exploring its course, and ascertaining how far it was navigable. Having received information which induced him to believe that a stockade at Kiung-Pala might be captured by the force under his command, he brought his vessels abreast of the works, and opened a cannonade upon them. They proved to be stronger than he expected, and he was obliged to retreat after some loss. Before the advance of the army towards the capital, the stockade was abandoned.” \*

\* Wilson’s History of British India, vol. iii. p. 107.

In a foot-note it is added, that six persons were killed, and thirty-two wounded in this affair. Among the former was, "Major Schalch, of the engineers, an officer of distinguished merit."

Although the army's immediate wants had been relieved by supplies sent in from the country, still our anxiety about the fleet, of whose whereabouts even we knew nothing, was so great that Fernandez was sent off in a little boat on a voyage of inquiry across the broad frith in our front. At daylight the next morning, I was made aware of his having returned, by hearing his voice in the outer division of my tent. I immediately arose, and found him in a state of great excitement, walking up and down, and muttering something to himself, in which the names of the Commodore and Major Schalch continually recurred. Feeling particularly anxious about the latter accomplished officer, who but a short time before had been very unwell, I said, rather impatiently, "What is it you say about Major Schalch, Fernandez—how is he?" He stopped short, drew himself up, and dashing the

large straw hat which he held crumpled up in his hand, to the ground, said but one word in reply, "Dead!" If old Fernandez had been capable of reading *Tristram Shandy*, one might have suspected him of studied imitation, for nothing could be more close than the resemblance between his action and that of Corporal Trim in the well-known scene in the kitchen.

This little exploring voyage did not profit poor Fernandez much. The element of caution entered but sparingly into his character; and his sarcastic comments on what he saw amiss, did not irritate the less because they seemed to escape from him without his having any idea of the point of what he was saying. There were but two classes of mankind in his apprehension—English gentlemen and "black fellows"—between whom he conceived himself to hold a sort of middle place. He never, consequently, seemed to be conscious of the conventional distinctions of social rank; and talked to the highest personages, military, naval, or civil, with the same freedom as he would have used in addressing a young assistant midshipman or ensign. This,

which ought to have amused, sometimes offended, and nothing but his experienced usefulness in every juncture of difficulty would have enabled him to hold his ground against the ill-will which he was every now and then unconsciously provoking.

The want of his flotilla, so needlessly crippled by its hurried despatch to sea, with only fresh-water boatmen on board, was now sensibly felt. The month of March was stealing away, and with the scanty means at command, all that could be hoped for was that the army should be able to reach the town of Arracan. But how different might not that army's position have been, if, by carrying a road round the Naf, it had been brought to the Myoo in the middle of February, and had there found an unbroken flotilla of 300 Mug boats, each capable of carrying a score of men !

Nothing would have been easier than to have secured these advantages. Captain Drummond, the Quarter-Master General, was a man of an iron frame and a devoted zeal. In exploring the forests through which he brought the road from Chitta-



gong to Ramoo, he endured exposure such as would have proved fatal to most Europeans. Travelling with only a few Mugs in his train, he was sometimes benighted in the jungle. In such a situation, where to sleep on the ground would be death, his Mug attendants used to lop the tops off four trees standing close to each other, and then to construct a platform on their top for him to pass the night on. .

That, with such an agent at hand for its accomplishment, a road to save a month's delay in crossing the Naf should not have been attempted, was as much to be wondered at as regretted. The reason why, may perhaps be conjectured from the following little circumstance.

While the army was still at Ramoo, the late Colonel, then Captain Shelton, of H. M.'s 44th, was sent out to explore and report upon the practicability of the suggested road.

Those who knew that ingenious officer will not be surprised to hear that his opinion did not tally well with what others had urged, or that whatever he advanced, whether correct or not,

was ably and cleverly supported. The particulars of his report I cannot remember, but I recollect that it told of "chemins creux" and other obstacles, which would probably have appeared less formidable in the homely language of Captain Drummond's description.

Captain Shelton's general ability no one could dispute; but that on a particular question like this, he should have been consulted in preference to an officer of Captain Drummond's long Indian experience, and immediate local knowledge acquired in the construction of the road we had just traversed from Chittagong to Ramoo, was a proof of the power of professional prepossession over even superior minds, when not habitually guarded against its influence.

Had the army and the flotilla met on the Myoo under the circumstances supposed, in the middle of February, there would have been time to take Arracan, and to advance by the Aing Pass to Sembew-Ghione on the Irrawaddy; assuming of course the possession of adequate strength to overcome the purely military difficulties of the latter enterprise. The pass, as

has been shown, had been known to us for several months. No doubt whatever existed of its practicability as a line of commercial communication, and I do not remember to have ever heard either General Morrison himself or any officer in his camp express the slightest misgiving as to the adequacy of his force for the undertaking, if the army could possibly be conveyed to Aing in good time before the close of the healthier season, that is, before the end of March.

But from speculations on what might have been, we must now turn to what actually occurred.

Every vessel which was there with the expedition—gun-boats, ship-boats, and Mug-boats—being brought to bear upon the operation, “a sufficient force for movements in advance was assembled on the 20th of March at Chankrain.” I remember the place, but not the name, being indebted for that to the same page as that cited above in Wilson’s History. It is a little more than twenty miles to the south of Arracan, with only one broad, and no unfordable, channel intervening. For the first two marches, to the best of my recollection, not the shadow of an enemy was

seen; on the third there was a faint exhibition of something like real war.

The enemy were first heard—for they could hardly be said to be seen—on a low range of thickly-wooded hills, about eight or ten miles from Arracan. The cover was so dense, that but for a flag or two, or a state umbrella that peeped out here and there among the foliage, the sound of an occasional shot, and the continual clanging of gongs or bells, no one could have conjectured that the hills were occupied.

Our troops, when first seen by myself and two young officers in semi-civilian employ, with whom I had ridden in the morning from the ground which the army had quitted on the preceding day, were, at about 10 A.M., drawn up in a line parallel with the enemy's position, and about half a mile's distance from it. Presently, the advance of a party of skirmishers on our left brought on the first contact with the foe; a few shots were heard, and then the whole line fired away like boys at their first day on the moors, and from the same feeling too. There was no danger, no visible enemy; each man fired because his

neighbour did, and because he wanted to soothe his own excitement with a little noise.

As soon as a stop was put to this irregular blazing, Captain Ferguson, of the Bengal army, was ordered to ascend the hill in his front, with three companies of sepoy. He did so, under a noisy though very ill-directed fire from the enemy, and not one of his own muskets was discharged until his whole party stood upon the summit, whence their opponents retreated before them.

I met the General directly after this little exploit, and he expressed himself much pleased with the conduct of the first party of Bengal sepoy, whom he had seen actively engaged. Yet in a subsequent report, the Native troops in general being characterised as incurably prone to loose firing, this very instance was cited in support of the charge; and when it was remarked that on the occasion in question Black and White sinned alike, if sin there were, the reply was—"True; and severe reproofs have been entered in the regimental books of the Whites;" but the injustice of only recording a limited

censure on the one, and drawing from a scanty induction, a sweeping conclusion to the disparagement of the whole body to which the other belonged, did not seem to be perceived.

I shall make no apology for this trespass upon what is, perhaps, exclusively soldier's ground, because, the bias of the present day towards an undue depreciation of Native capacity, and a disregard for purely Native feeling, is quite as strong among our countrymen in civil, as among those in military situations of power and command. This bias necessarily engenders a contemptuous bearing towards a people of a keen susceptibility, who are more easily to be led by their attachment to individuals, than by their reverence for any system however wise and beneficial.

This is peculiarly the case, with the military classes of Upper India, of whom the Bengal army is, or ought to be, composed; and therefore those who wish the Bengal sepoy to be what his predecessors were under Lake and Ochterlony, should inquire how those commanders conducted themselves towards their native officers and men,

and try to regulate their own deportment accordingly. The worst of the repulsive system is, that it produces the very faults which it imputes ; for the men naturally become estranged from superiors who evince no sympathy for them. Allusion has been made to the days of Lake and Ochterlony, but it is unnecessary to go so far back to find proofs of what good service sepoys may, under judicious management, be brought to render.

● Almost simultaneously with the march on Arracan, Colonel Alfred Richards was employed, with an army consisting of Natives alone, in driving the Burmese out of Assam.\* The present Sir James Brooke, then a young ensign serving under Colonel Richards, had been allowed to act on a suggestion of his own, for supplying the want of cavalry in Assam, by selecting a hundred sepoys, who could ride, and mounting them on ponies taken from the enemy.

When, at the attack of Rungpore in Upper Assam, this young officer fell, as it was supposed, mortally wounded, one of his own dismounted troopers, employed with others in carrying him

from the field, perceiving that his sword had fallen, exclaimed, "It shall never be said that my master left the field without his sword," and ran back into the midst of the fire to look for it.

This little troop had always been employed under its juvenile commander, in accompanying the Quarter-Master General of the force in Afghanistan, the late Captain Neufville, and would, it may be safely asserted, have followed either of those two officers on any enterprise, however dangerous.

If we ask the reason, it was not because the sepoys were much better than others, but simply because their leaders were both of them men of enlarged minds and engaging manners, who did not think it beneath them to conciliate the affections, as well as to command the obedience, of those over whom they were placed.

No one in his senses, of course, disputes the vast superiority of the European, and particularly of the Briton, in all the more robust virtues, of which, indeed, the very existence of our Eastern Empire is a standing proof: but in that climate a Native army cannot be dispensed with; there-



fore it is useful to observe how the plastic material of which such a force is composed can be moulded into a form of strength by skilful handling.

The enemy disappeared so rapidly before our troops, that there was nothing to divert the attention of those who followed, from the really beautiful scenery of the country through which they were progressing.

The hills in that quarter are low, covered with trees, but not with rankly luxuriant vegetation, suggestive of thoughts of damp and death, such as loads the heights immediately surrounding the town of Arracan. The march ended on a plain in front of Muhatee, a village with a large Buddhist temple, standing at one end of a range of hills of which the further extremity touches the town.

There was something picturesque also in this spot, where a river of about a hundred yards in width, issuing from the wooded hills, formed an angle in its course, and flanked the site of the temple on its western and southern sides. Behind this river the enemy's entrenchments ran,

and from these he was next day driven, after a slight skirmish. •

Our army then, on the 28th of March, 1825, took up its quarters at Muhatee, to be ready to attack the town of Arracan on the ensuing morning. The distance between Muhatee and Arracan is about three miles. • The road runs along a valley which, wide towards Muhatee, contracts as Arracan is approached, till it ends in a narrow defile leading to one of the gates of the town. The hills on the left are high, and the summits often bare, but the sides are thickly wooded, and the range stretches in a straight line parallel with the road along its whole extent, and though not actually overhanging, yet never receding from it.

The hills on the right only draw near to the line of the road at the Arracan end of the valley, when they bend round towards the opposite range, and so form the defile through which the town is to be entered. At about a quarter of a mile from the gorge of this defile there was a large tank with high banks serving as a look-out place for non-combatants, and eventually

becoming the site of the field-hospital for the wounded.

The morning of the 29th March opened with a fog, in density quite equal to those so common in London. It was impossible to discern objects fifty feet ahead. The march was in consequence very slow, and at every hundred paces there was a brief halt. While nothing could be seen, the whooping and yelling of the Burmese on the heights to the left, enabled a judgment to be formed by its "crescendo" of the rate of our army's approach to the town.

At last, at about 9 A.M., just as the General and his Staff reached the tank above described, the fog cleared away, and discovered the advanced guard so far committed within the defile, that for them—

"Returning were as tedious as go o'er."

Feeling this, they did not hesitate, but instantly endeavoured to scale the height on their left, to attack the entrenchment on its crest. This was an anxious moment for the spectators assembled at the tank. Whether it had been artificially scarped, or that such was its natural

form, the slope of the hill for about fifty yards below the enemy's line of entrenchment was loose and bare. Below this, again, all was hid by the wood which overhung the defile, and crept some way up the hill. Out of this cover every now and then small parties of our brave soldiers were seen to emerge and push up the open unprotected rise, till wounds, or the excessive steepness of the ascent, compelled them to stretch themselves on the slope, to which they clung like lizards on a wall, till one after another they were rolled back into the wood below by the large stones thrown down upon them by the Burmese.

Great, of course, was the excitement among the party at the tank, and orders were soon given for reinforcing the advanced guard in the defile. On the first company of a regiment of Madras Native infantry being named aloud to proceed on this duty, a young officer standing near me exclaimed, "First company! oh, that's glorious!" and sprang down from the side of the tank to join his men.

Immediately afterwards Captain French, of the

16th Madras Native infantry, (whose name is erroneously given as Trant in Wilson's History, vol. iii. page 109,) started to take command of the whole detachment sent, and as he galloped past me, said, "Here I go, and I'll be hanged if anything shall stop me."

This party was soon lost sight of in the defile, and then the firing, which had ceased for a time, recommenced; but ere long again subsided; whence it was concluded, as was afterwards found to be the case, that the reinforcement had proved too weak for what had baffled the advanced guard; and that the whole party had contrived to shelter itself from the enemy's fire under the rocks, and would remain where they were till darkness should favour their retreat. The wounded soon began to arrive.

Colonel, now General Kemm, of the Bengal army, was brought in on a ladder; three officers of H.M.'s 54th were able to walk, though one of them not without aid; and among the wounded of lower grade, I remember well, that there were several of the Mug levy, who had been formed into a rifle-company under Captain Macfarlan of

the Madras army. Along with these sufferers arrived the melancholy tidings of the death of Captain French, who had perished in a gallant but unavailing attempt to make his sepoy's achieve what even a party of 'H. M.'s 54th had found to be impossible.

It was here that the real horrors of war began to force themselves on the notice of those to whom the campaign had hitherto been but a military promenade, of which the brighter aspect was exciting, and the darker only a little worrying.

The most startling object seen by myself during the two preceding days, was the head of a Burmese warrior tied up in the handkerchief of a philosophic assistant surgeon, who was preserving it for some purpose of scientific research. A few wounds were heard of, and the dead body of a Burmese might here and there have caught my eye.

But such reports and such sights are scarcely strange to any one who has served as a magistrate in Upper India, and the whole affair seemed so likely to end without any serious struggle,

that on receiving from his agents at Madras a letter addressed to my friend Captain French, with instructions to return it to them in the event of any accident to him, I sent it over to that officer at Muhatee, on the evening of the 28th of March, with a jocular note, to which he replied in a similar strain. Before the next noon, and within ten minutes of the moment when he rode past me, as already described, his career was ended; and I then felt how much more forcibly we may be affected by the sudden passing from life to death of a single individual, than by the most tragic fate of hundreds with whom we have no personal acquaintance.

The hospital also, established behind the tank, read aloud, to those within hearing, its lesson on the realities that lie hid beneath the outward circumstance of war; and as I listened to the agonizing shrieks of a poor European artilleryman, whose leg was being amputated, I remember saying to myself, "This then is glory!"

As evening drew on, the Burmese evinced a disposition to come down upon the advanced

guard in the defile, but they did not risk the attempt, and as soon as it was dark the whole party was withdrawn. The next day, the 30th of March, was spent in collecting information, and in communicating with the Mug chieftains of the neighbouring country, whose confidence in our ultimate success did not appear to be in the least degree shaken by the slight check of the preceding day.

On the 31st, the General's plans having been matured, were carried into execution in the following manner:—The gateway, being so effectually covered by the defile leading to it, as to render another attempt in that direction unadvisable, General Morrison decided on attacking the heights that overhung his camp on the one side, and the town of Arracan on the other.

The party for this service consisted of a few companies of H. M.'s 44th, a detachment of Sepoys, with a few Mugs to guide, and about a score of dismounted troopers of Gardiner's horse, whose services as swordsmen might, it was thought, prove useful. In the selection of these troopers, the risk of acting upon preconceptions



about unknown matters became apparent. To gentlemen who come out to the East, full grown with what has lately been called by a noble lord in his examination before the Committee of the House of Commons, "purely English minds," the character of the natives of India in general, and most especially of such natives as were to be found in the ranks of Gardiner's horse, is a provoking puzzle, and one which they often blunder in trying to solve for themselves. These irregular corps were, a quarter of a century since, filled with the descendants of the decayed nobility and gentry of Upper India, both Moossulman and Hindoo, men who shrunk from the European dress and drill of our regular cavalry, yet were constrained, by the prejudices or feelings of caste and family, to seek for their livelihood in the profession of arms.

In none of these corps were there more of such men of good descent to be found, than in that commanded by Colonel Gardiner, who, himself a scion of a noble family, and having in his youth been made free of the more polished circles of society in Europe, exhibited in his own man-

ners the good breeding of the West, in union with that of the East; and thus by his personal bearing alone, attracted many a well-born youth to his standard. On the march from the Myoo to Arracan, it had been in contemplation to deprive the corps of its grasscutters, and to make the troopers cut the grass for their own horses; a measure, however reasonable in European eyes, certain by them to be regarded as an indignity, and a breach of the terms on which they had entered the service.

This difficulty was got over mainly through Colonel Gardiner's tact and address; and now another fresh European notion was started, such as he well knew would with his men turn to the burlesque. He was told to parade his corps, then above 500 strong; to proclaim that twenty of their number were wanted for a particular service on foot, of probable danger; and to invite those who would volunteer for it to dismount. The Colonel represented this mode of proceeding to be quite unsuited to the character of his men, and that the best course to follow was, to let him take the first twenty on the roster for duty;

in which way the selection must be made at last, because the communication which he was directed to make, would, he knew, be followed by the whole regiment's dismounting together.

Whether the original resolution was kept to or not, *has escaped my recollection*, but of the design I heard from Colonel Gardiner himself.

The party to ascend the hills was placed under the command of Colonel W. Richards, of the Bengal army, brother of the officer already named as commanding the force in Assam.

The moon was then in its first quarter, and as it sank behind the hills on the western side of the valley, Colonel Richards silently crossed the darkened plain, and speedily disappeared among the jungle.

This was between 7 and 8 P.M.; and as it was calculated that the ascent would be accomplished in a couple of hours, the whole line began to assemble in front of their tents at about 10 o'clock, looking towards the opposite heights, on which the watch-fires of the enemy marked the position of their several outposts. All remained quite still, and the hills, with the woods that

clothed their sides leaving the summits only bare, lay as if hushed in slumber and repose till nearly midnight. Many were beginning to fear that our party had lost their way among the thickets of the jungle;—with some, sleep was proving too strong for curiosity, while all began to weary of waiting—when suddenly a single shot was heard; then, after an interval of two or three minutes, a few single shots followed each other in rapid succession. Again a pause ensued, ending in a partial volley or two, serving as a prelude to the “British grenadiers!” which heart-stirring tune, played on the drums of the detachment, announced their success to their friends on the plain, who responded with a cheer loud enough to dismay every Burmese within ear-shot. In fact, as we afterwards learnt, the chief men among them, on hearing of Colonel Richards being on the heights, lost no time in escaping from a town which they could no longer defend.

The place, indeed, was virtually taken; but still a faint show of resistance was kept up, when Colonel Richards from the heights, and General

Morrison from the plain, moved into the town, in the forenoon of the ensuing day.

I accompanied the General on that occasion, and so had an opportunity of seeing in miniature the fearful spectacle of a town taken by assault.

No serious resistance was made, and the men entered unruffled by any deadly struggle in the breach ; and yet, as they poured into the place, the bands of discipline seemed to be entirely relaxed, and the army with its followers spread like a flood over the devoted town.

For at least two hours all authority was in abeyance ; the soldiers were for that interval their own masters, and did what pleased them best. Shots were heard in various directions, but some were directed against birds, some fired from wantonness, and but very few apparently discharged with malice, though here and there a man lay dead in the streets, who had come by his death no one could tell how.

It then might be seen how unmerited are the reproaches so often bestowed upon officers in command on similar occasions. A more humane or a more conscientious man than General

Morrison never commanded an army, and yet his best efforts could only abridge the period of lawless violence and excess, which seems to be the natural and inevitable sequel to a forcible entrance into a captured town.

At last a fire broke out in the bazaar, and the flames spreading rapidly among houses built of mats, reeds, and bamboos, soon drove both fighting-men and followers back to the camp, and so contributed to the restoration of order. The two or three next ensuing days were devoted to burying the dead, clearing away the cinders of what the fire had consumed, and reducing what remained of the town into a state to allow an opinion to be formed of its fitness for the site of a cantonment, in the too probable event of our having to pass the rainy season where we were.

The town of Arracan was not a cheerful-looking place, even then in the brightest part of the year, and gave fearful promise, to those acquainted with the climate of the adjacent south-eastern provinces of Bengal, of what it would be in the fast approaching rains..

The town stood on the bottom of a sort of

natural cup, of perhaps about a mile in diameter, intersected by a small river, flowing like an inland stream, and fordable at low water, when it formed a tiny cascade in escaping from the walls, but liable to the influence of the tide, and consequently having its banks deformed by a margin of slime. The soil consisted of rock intermingled with mire; and upon a somewhat elevated platform of the former, stood the citadel or inner town of an oblong form, enclosed within walls, constructed with stones of almost Cyclopean massiveness.

A circle of low hills formed the edge of the cup in which the town stood. \*

Those hills, not for the most part exceeding a couple of hundred feet in height, stood naturally detached from each other, but had been linked together throughout a great part of the circle by artificial mounds of earth, faced with stone; gigantic works of an earlier age, along the top of which the puny entrenchments of the immediate defenders of the place had been carried.

These connecting mounds were of a magnitude to countenance what the Mug chroniclers assert

of the former grandeur of their race, but it is always to be borne in mind in drawing such conclusions from the great doings of ancient rulers, of whom no other record remains, that the power unscrupulously exercised by the monarchs of those early days, at least in Asia and Africa, of compelling the whole mass of their subjects to devote their labours to the accomplishment of any favourite design, rendered it possible for a very feeble state to leave very bulky vestiges to excite the admiration and curiosity of succeeding generations.

What ancient Egypt suffered that the Pyramids might rise, no one can tell; and who thinks now of the 30,000 men, women, and children, said to have perished, since this century commenced, to accelerate the excavation of the canal connecting the Nile with Alexandria? It may be doubted, therefore, whether the walls of Arracan prove more for the ancient condition of that country, than the Muhmoodee canal does for the present prosperity of Egypt.

The hills, thus through some part of their extent artificially formed into a connected range, had



their sides and the ground at their base for the most part overspread with tangled jungle, while on some of the few open spots on their slopes, natural beds of wild pine-apple were to be found. Along with this vegetable sign of our being in a new region—for wild pine-apples are never seen even in the contiguous district of Chittagong—there was in the animal kingdom a peculiarity, in the absence of jackals, to apprise us that we had entered the territory of the King of Ava, within whose rule the howl of those noisy night vagrants is never, it is asserted, to be heard.

The aspect of the place had but little to invite us to tarry; the accounts given of it by all, of whom we sought information, were calculated to make us shrink from the thought of taking up our rainy season quarters on such a spot.

The chief of the Mahommedan inhabitants of the province was named Sooja Qâzee. With him we had long been in secret communication; and as he spoke Hindostannee very well, he was one of the people of local influence with whom I held most conversation after the town

was in our possession. He asked if we really thought of remaining in Arracan. On being told that such a resolution was probable, he said, "Then I warn you, from my knowledge of the effect of the climate on new comers, that one half of your number will surely die."

This warning from a well-informed native of the place, was confirmed by the opinion of the chief of our own medical staff, Dr. Ludovick Grant, a sturdy Highlander, who on being remonstrated with for depressing our spirits replied, "I tell you what it is,—you have, in my opinion, but a little time to live, and I think it right to warn you, that you may live like good Christians while you can."

The month wasted in the passage of the Naf, and the little care taken of the flotilla, were now felt in their results; for had the army reached Arracan on the 1st of March, instead of the 1st of April, there might have been a chance of its being transported to the healthy plains of the Upper Irrawaddy before the rainy season began.

But now such a movement being quite im-

possible, so crippled were our means of carriage, it only remained for the General to decide, whether to stay where he was; to seek out a healthier site near the sea; or to propose to Government to withdraw the bulk of the force, leaving only a party of sufficient strength to prevent, with the aid of the people of the country, the Burmese from regaining possession of what they had lost.

It was the first of these three courses that the General determined to adopt, and consequently every effort required to be made to provide shelter for our troops, before the inclement season should set in.

This was a task of not less difficulty than emergency, for there was not a building, with the exception of a few temples, occupied (to the great disgust of the Mugs) as hospitals, capable of accommodating even an individual; while whole regiments required to be housed, and that within a month or six weeks at the latest, to secure them from the first burst of the monsoon, before whose sweeping rain no tent could possibly stand.

Various officers were appointed by the General to superintend this important work, on the timely completion of which the very existence of the whole army depended; but the provision of the material, and the assembling of a sufficient number of artificers and labourers, devolved entirely upon myself, and could not possibly have been performed by any one who had not passed some time among the Mugs, and acquired some influence over them. The chiefs with whom I conferred, explained to me that the article mainly required, the bamboo, could only be supplied in great quantity by the tribes on the skirts of the higher mountains, a wilder race than the Mugs, and only as yet known to us through the latter. Timber, and a kind of bulrush used for roofing instead of thatch, were, to the best of my recollection, all that could be supplied from the plain.

The plan adopted, in as far as I can remember, was, to commute all the claims of the State on the various chiefs, or village communities, into demands for certain quotas of labourers, and certain quantities of material.

After this was all arranged there was an interval of great anxiety, for as the whole country had been thrown by our invasion into confusion, and bulky articles for building cannot be handed in like a parcel, upwards of a week elapsed before the first supplies began to appear; and the scheme of sending parties out to stimulate the chiefs to more alacrity, began to be talked of in a way to warrant a fear of its being acted on. Had any such attempt been made, the border chiefs, on whom we mainly depended for the most essential articles, would have retired into their mountains, and there have proved as difficult to coerce as the monkeys. In about a fortnight the materials began to pour in from the country in such abundance as to leave no anxiety, excepting from the want of hands, as to the speedy completion of huts and barracks, for officers as well as men.

To meet this want an order was issued for the whole body of the soldiery to assist in the construction of their own barracks, and this order, perfectly right and proper in itself, led to a partial display of an insubordinate spirit among

the Bengal sepoys in our camp. The position of the Bengal sepoy, as he is called, from the Presidency to which he belongs,—though Hindostannee sepoy would be the more distinctive title to give him, as he is generally drawn from the provinces of the Middle and Upper Ganges,—is one of the puzzles before spoken of, as proving of difficult solution to those who visit India for the first time at a mature age.

The Bengal sepoy is virtually a militiaman, one engaged for a service limited to Hindoo land. He can no more be with justice required to serve beyond the limits of Hindooism, than an English militiaman could during the war in Europe have been required to serve out of the British Isles. To embark on board ship, unless enlisted with that understanding, can under no circumstances be justly exacted of him. When wanted beyond seas, the practice in former days was to announce the service, and to call for volunteers; and it was thus that the Native battalions were formed, which so well upheld the character of the Bengal army in Egypt, at the Mauritius, and at Java. Since then the practice

has been introduced of raising battalions for general service, in which the condition of entering is, that the sepoy shall be prepared to embark if required; and this is the case with the whole Native army at Madras. In respect to such regiments, therefore, there is no difficulty; but with the rest of the Bèngal army, and *I believe by far the best portion of it*, there can be no doubt of the sepoy's right to refuse to go on board of a ship, and some doubt of our Government's right to send him, even by land, beyond the limits over which the Hindoo faith prevails.

The order for certain regiments at Barrackpore near Calcutta, to move down to Chittagong and Arracan, had excited a spirit of discontent among the men, such as a Malcolm or an Ochterlony would probably have appeased without force or bloodshed, but which, under the handling of the "chief military authorities of the day, men imperfectly acquainted with the character of the sepoy, and disdaining to humour his peculiarities,\*" had led, on the 1st of November, 1824, to

\* Wilson's History, vol. iii. p. 100.

one of the most deplorable scenes recorded in the history of British India.

The sepoy is in some respects like a child in his temperament, and never was his childish frowardness more decidedly evinced than on the occasion in question. The order resisted, was one to march without the usual aid in the way of carriage, which circumstances rendered it impossible at the moment for the Government to supply. The sepoys were unreasonable and disobedient, but that they were not animated by any really malevolent spirit, is evident from the place where their contumacy was displayed.

If instead of breaking out at Barrackpore, where regiments of Europeans were at hand to reduce them, they had postponed the explosion until after a few days' march towards Chittagong, they would have had their officers in their power; and might have done what they liked. This consideration had no weight with those who had to deal with them, and who, acting in strict and somewhat pedantic conformity with European precedent, fixed a certain number of minutes for laying down arms, and did everything in



that hard and dry manner by which it is so easy in moments of excitement, to push an Indian prince to war, an Indian subject to revolt, and an Indian soldier to mutiny.

It is impossible to say precisely, at this distance of time, what could have been done; but nothing worse can be imagined than what was done in the opening of a fire from an almost masked battery, upon men whose muskets there is good reason to believe were unloaded,\* and then, *horribile dictu!* setting our own British-born soldier to the dreadful task of treating his ancient companion in arms, the Jack Sepoy of the days of Lake, as his fellest foe.

So intense was the interest taken in this event by the Native soldiery, that we discovered, to our surprise, intelligence of the mutiny and its suppression to have been received in the lines at Chittagong, before it reached General Morrison and myself, though it was transmitted to us by a special express. The effect produced on the sepoy mind seemed to be one of horror and amazement. "They are your own men whom

\* Wilson's History, vol. iii. p. 103, foot note.

you have been destroying," said an old Native officer in talking of the matter, and seemed afraid to trust himself to say more. Among the English residents at Chittagong, then mostly military, the account of what had happened was received by some with concern, but by too many with undissembled satisfaction. . There was one person, however, and he an officer of His Majesty's army, fresh from Europe, who seemed intuitively to take the humane, the enlightened, and the just view of the question. This was the late Colonel Grant, of the 54th Foot. I sat next to him at dinner, on the evening of the day on which the news from Barrackpore had been received, and I remember well the contrast exhibited between his calm clear-sighted reflections on what had happened, and the hasty passionate comments of many others at the table.

Should it please Heaven and the Horse Guards to send out many such men as Colonel Grant, no one would complain of the purely English cast of their minds, for when combined with teachableness, the surest test of high

capacity, there can be no doubt of the superiority ("cæteris paribus,") of the mind schooled in Europe, over that which has been trained since boyhood in the East.

It may be inferred from what has been said, that the Bengal sepoy in our camp had brought with them no small stock of jill-humour from Chittagong; and this prepared them to receive with disgust the order to work at the construction of their own barracks. They acknowledged the obligation to toil at any field work, such as throwing up a battery or digging an entrenchment, but they denied barrack building to come within the category of military labours.

The affair began to look serious, for the sepoy would not touch either shovel or pickaxe, and speculations began to fly about upon the probability of a repetition, in Arracan, of the then recent scene at Barrackpore.

A special parade of the Bengal regiments in half-dress was then ordered, and at this General Morrison particularly requested me to attend.

The ceremony was an anxious one; there was a sullen expression on the faces of the men

premonitory of evil to all who were familiar with the Upper Indian physiognomy. The evil apprehended was to themselves of course, for, isolated as they were, among European soldiers, unsympathising Madras sepoy and local levies, there was no risk of their proving dangerous to others. The General's harangue was a very good one, but it might not have told, if it had not been rendered into Hindostannee in the most masterly manner by the interpreter, Captain Phillips of the Bengal army.

Never were European thoughts so skilfully clad in an Asiatic dress. Captain Phillips took up each sentence as it fell from the General's lips, extracted its essence, and transmitted this, stripped of its Europeanism, to the listening sepoy in their own idiomatic phraseology.

All the natives of Hindostan among the bystanders, expressed afterwards their admiration of Captain Phillips's performance, saying that they had never before witnessed such an exhibition of the power of their own language; but those only who heard and understood the original, could fully appreciate the difficulty of the inter-

preter's task, for as he spoke it, the General's speech would perhaps have been more fitly addressed to the Pannonian legions, than to a party of refractory Hindoos.

When it closed, the men looked sulkily at one another for a few minutes, then one sepoy took off his jacket, and others following his example, they all set to the required work, and their short fit of naughtiness was at an end. But though obedient they were not contented, and often in riding past groups of them employed in their distasteful labours, I was addressed by name as one familiar with their country and its ways, and asked to look at the Brahmin and Rajpoot reduced to carry burdens like a cooly. Still it must be admitted that the demand made upon them was, under the peculiar circumstances of their position, reasonable, and that the military authorities were quite justified in insisting upon their compliance.

Though house and barrack building were the objects of most pressing importance, as affecting the very existence of the army, at a season when the clouds began to lour over our heads, and

we knew not how soon the monsoon, with its deluging rain, might be upon us, there were other matters of a more strictly civil nature, to which attention was urgently required. In the interval between the expulsion of the Burmese and the complete establishment of the British power, all restraint being for a while removed, the country seemed on the verge of becoming completely disorganized.

Outrages similar to those recorded in the mediæval annals of our Scottish Highlands, were then of not unfrequent occurrence in Arracan; and to this nothing contributed more than the belief of the people that, from the tardiness of our judicial proceedings, a murder even would not be punished for a year after its perpetration. This immense distance between a crime and its penalty, of which they were assured by such of their own tribe as had been settled under our rule in Chittagong, was so suggestive of the ideas of evasion and impunity, that had they not been disabused of the prevailing error, and taught that under semi-military occupancy our measures could be more prompt than in com-

posed and quiet times, the whole province would have become a scene of bloodshed, from the breaking forth of long suppressed hatred among a race tenacious to an extraordinary degree of enmities arising out of hereditary and family feuds.

A trait of peculiar barbarity in the character of the Mugs, appears in strange connexion with the strongest of their tender and amiable feelings. They are devotedly attached to their children, and they practise upon this common feeling as a means of coercion and of vengeance.

While at Cox's Bazaar, on our way to the frontier, we found difficulty in procuring the attendance of a certain refractory chief, who had been summoned to appear with his quota at that place. Another chief, who acted as interpreter, in speaking of the best way of dealing with the contumacious absentee, said, "I know how to make him come in with his men, but it is useless to tell you, for you will not do what I am thinking of." He was encouraged to proceed, and then said, "He," meaning the absentee, "is very fond of his children, who

are all left here with their mother. If you will order the youngest child to be seized and threaten to kill it, the father will come in directly."

Whenever in our subsequent progress a difficulty was encountered in dealing with the Mugs, my friend Captain Drummond used to say to me, "You must kill a young child, or we never shall get on."

Many instances might be found in the Burmese annals, of both wives and children having been put to death to satisfy the wrath of the ruler at some offender who had escaped his grasp; and cases could be produced from the criminal records of Arracan, even since our regular administration began, of children having been slaughtered out of vengeance before their parents' eyes. One instance occurs to me of a man taking refuge in his own barricaded house from the pursuit of a party of his personal enemies, and when attacked there, defending it so stoutly, that they could not get at him. Upon this the assailants having caught hold of the poor man's son, a child of four or five years old,



brought the infant in front of the house, and there cut him to pieces before the eyes of the father, who, infuriated at the sight, rushed out with a sword in each hand, and fought desperately until he himself also was slain.

A horrible case of similar ferocity occurred soon after our taking possession of Arracan. One family having got the better of another, all the adult males of the vanquished party were put to death, the women and children being detained in captivity. The chief of the district where the event took place reported that the offenders were too strong for him to deal with, and that they were certain to resist by force any attempt made to arrest them.

Upon this José Fernandez was despatched to the assistance of the local authority, and they set out together in quest of the murderers. In rounding the reach of a river they came in sight of a large boat known to be that belonging to those whom they were seeking for. They immediately gave chase, and Fernandez having the advantage of the malefactors in respect to the speed of his boat, began rapidly to gain upon them.

Seeing this they pulled towards shore, and taking the children of their victims along with them, landed, and disappeared in the jungle. Fernandez landed also in pursuit, and had not followed their track far before he came first upon one and then upon another dead body of a freshly slaughtered infant, cut in two by the fugitives in their retreat. The sight only quickened his ardour to seize the perpetrators of these acts of wanton atrocity; and the energetic old man succeeding in this, as in everything else that he undertook, soon captured the whole gang, whose speedy conviction and punishment prevented the contagion of sanguinary vengeance from leading to a repetition of similar enormities in other parts of the province.

It may be thought by the European reader, that a people capable of these acts of ferocity must have proved difficult to govern; but such was not the case; for, excepting on occasions of extraordinary excitement, the Mugs\* are an orderly and easily managed race.

\* The English private soldiers rather liked the Mug; and I remember an instance of a party of them rowing a long way to bring off some of that tribe whom, from the sinking of a boat, they had

It was fortunate that it was so, for at that moment our only machinery for the administration of the interior was the agency of the chiefs whom we found in the country, and of some whom we brought with us from Chittagong. An attempt was made to depute young English officers into the remoter parts of the province, but it was necessarily abandoned from the deadly effects of the climate, against which we had not, at that early period, learnt how to guard.

Though the feeling of being within reach of medical aid, and the sympathy of friends, rendered a residence at Arracan less depressing to the spirits than a sojourn in the interior, yet, in point of salubrity, little was gained by removing from the country to the town. Scarcely had the

been obliged to leave on an island. The men, in describing the operation, said, "We could not think of leaving John Mug all night on the island." The General did not share this feeling, but his prejudice against the Mugs did no harm, and gave birth to the following excellent pun:—The General wrote to Government that no reliance was to be placed on the Mugs to serve as coolies or carriers of burdens in the event of an advance. In circulating this letter among the members of Government, the Secretary, Mr. George Swinton, endorsed it with the following pencilled note of its contents—"Plenty of mugs, but no porter."

sheds to serve as houses and barracks been roofed in, when the rains came down with a violence surpassing anything that we had ever witnessed in Bengal, and telling upon our feelings with the more effect from the slightness of the shelter under which we had to abide their force. The roofs leaked for half-an-hour when rain followed any interval of dry weather; but as soon as the bulrushes they were made of swelled with the moisture, they became water-tight, and kept out the perpendicular stream very well. The noise caused by the ceaseless falling of the torrents that descended was one of the most grievous of the annoyances endured by the inmates of these rush-covered tenements. It can only be described by comparing it to what would be produced by the pattering of a shower of hard peas on a gigantic drum. But all of these little annoyances soon sank into insignificance before the pestilence which, as the month of June advanced, began to walk through our ranks and to pick out its victims, at first by units, then by tens and scores, and at last by hundreds.

The Bengal infantry sepoy's suffered the most. In fact, they disappeared altogether; and I remember going to look at the barracks constructed for one of their battalions, and finding that there was not a single man in it. Every one who was not dead was in hospital.

Gardiner's Horse bore up better. As the character of the climate began to declare itself, the men of that corps sent a petition to their Colonel, beseeching him to leave them to their fate, and to quit the place. "If you live," they said, "we know that our families will be taken care of; but if you die as well as we, what will become of them?"

Colonel Gardiner, whose presence at Arracan could no longer have been of any use, and whose great age and general delicacy of health rendered further exposure in his case peculiarly inexpedient, was persuaded to withdraw; and after he was gone the native officers of his corps subscribed to purchase a piece of plate to present to the medical gentleman to whose skill his escape even then with life was, under Providence, attributable.

As the disease progressed, its influence cast a gloom over even the English private soldiers. Often did they come to me, as the person best able to obtain things procurable from the country, to beg for some planks to construct a coffin for a comrade in hospital; so certain was the issue of the prevailing fever when once it had seized its prey; and so strong was the repugnance of the soldiers to let any one who died in peaceful quarters be buried without a shell to protect his remains.

Every afternoon at about four or five o'clock, the rumble of carts crossing a little wooden bridge at the foot of the hill on which my residence was fixed, told that the funerals of the European victims of that day had commenced, and showed by the repetitions of the melancholy noise what their number for the day was. I remember to have counted as many as eight or nine of these successive sounds.

Upon the spirits of the officers the effect was, I think, far less marked than upon those of the men, and this may be accounted for from their superior means of amusement and mental

employment. It was remarkable also, that those who had most to do suffered least. There was no precaution, to be taken against the unseen foe, but that indicated by Fernandez when he said, "Don't listen to those who tell you that brandy and water, or anything of that sort, is good in this climate. \* The best thing you can do is to drink coffee like me. I never drink anything stronger, and I am always well." At last, however, the climate told upon him, though in a different way from what it did upon others. In working at the construction of a bridge of boats on the advance from the Myoo, he had fallen down in a fit, apparently brought on by the effects of the sun. At our first meeting after this attack, on my saying that we all had thought him to be proof against any influence of the kind, he replied, "Ah, sir, the house must fall some day."

He never was quite the same man again, and though he escaped the fever, yet his general health was so much impaired by the great exertions he had made, that he soon after retired to Chittagong, where he obtained from

Government a liberal provision for the comfort of his declining years, though perhaps scarcely an adequate recompense for services not to be estimated but by those who were mingled up in the same operations with himself.

The dreary rains were dragging their slow length along, and, disease and death seemed to be becoming the rule, health and life the exception, amongst all the strangers assembled at Arracan. It was then that the Mug levy proved of use by performing much of the outpost and other duty. Had there been any enemy near, our situation would have been precarious, but the Burmese had luckily, by that time, plenty to attend to at home. Arracan also is, in the rainy season, unapproachable to any but a power possessing the command of the water, and on that element our superiority was absolute. At this time of suffering, the conduct of General Morrison was worthy of all admiration. Daily were his visits to the hospital, and while there he was employed in reading to the sick and dying, administering to them those consolations of religion, which there was no clergyman at



hand to impart. There was a Chaplain at Chittagong, but his reluctance to quit that place was so strong that General Morrison forbore, out of compassion, from compelling him to accompany the army. The devotion of all the members of the medical staff to their duties was most exemplary. Not one of them, however ill, withdrew from the province where several of their number died. A fine example was in this respect set by their head, Dr. L. Grant, the superintending surgeon with the force. He was attacked by the fever, and recovered. When told that, to save his life, he ought to go, he replied, "No, sir, this is our post," and I will not set the example of leaving it." He soon afterwards had a relapse, which proved fatal.

Each of the surgeons on the spot had a hospital with upwards of four hundred patients in it to attend to, and I have myself seen some of them, in the intervals of their own agues, wrapped up in boat-cloaks and busied in visiting the sufferers under their charge. The Native troops were not unobservant of this attention to their wants, or ungrateful for it.

The gentleman who had medical charge of Gardiner's Horse, was also attached in the same capacity to my establishment. One day several of the Native officers came to request me to exert my influence with this gentleman to make him more careful of himself, and less assiduous in his attendance on the men in hospital. "The death of a dozen of us," they said, "does not matter, but if he dies the whole corps will perish."

The comments of the Mugs upon the prevailing sickness were curious. They ascribed it entirely to the wrath of the gods at our impiety in having removed their statues from a temple, in order to convert it into a hospital. "There can be no doubt about it," said one of their number, "for I heard them weeping all night in the jungle, after their expulsion from their temple." I then thought the poor Mug's credulity a proof of his lack of culture and civilization; but in what is a weeping statue more absurd, than the winking Madonnas or bleeding pictures of more polished regions?

There remains but one other topic connected with this province to be noticed, and then we

may proceed to more agreeable scenes. The passes leading from Arracan to the plains of the Irrawaddy have given rise to some comment and not a little misconception. In a foot note at page 112 of the third volume of Professor H. H. Wilson's History of India, it is stated, "that though the existence of the most important of these routes may have been reported to Government, yet no attempt was made to ascertain the real nature of this line of communication."

It has already been shown what information was collected and recorded regarding the best known of these passes, that by Aing. It now remains to show that another pass, correctly described by the historian as "beset with almost insurmountable difficulties," that by Talak, was equally well known and had been as minutely inquired into.

It is also necessary to explain how it happened that the only effort made to penetrate into Ava by any of those routes, as the historian says, "was with singular infelicity made to follow that direction." The particulars are, in my

opinion, full of instruction, especially to officers suddenly employed in new and strange localities, and this consideration induces me to relate the precise circumstances attending the despatch of the expedition under Major Bucke, of which there is but the most summary account given in Wilson's History before cited.

It was towards the end of May, or the beginning of June, 1825, some time after our arrival at Arracan, that General Morrison came to me one morning very early, full of a plan for sending a detachment by a Pass of his own discovering, to attack a Burmese post at its further extremity. From a few questions put to the General, it appeared that this newly discovered Pass was one of the four of which he had in his possession a copy of the detailed description furnished by myself to Government on the 30th July, 1824.

Not to load my page with a number of hard unpronounceable names, this description is not, as that of the Aing Pass has been, inserted in the text, but it will be found in the Appendix. • The Talak Pass, as this is called, was well known to be by far more difficult than that by Aing, and

nothing could be more certain than the impossibility of any good resulting from an attempt to penetrate by it to the plains of the Irrawaddy at the then advanced season of the year.

At an earlier stage of our intercourse, I should at once have pointed out these simple facts to the General, but experience had taught me how profitless such communications were, and therefore I contented myself with saying that I thought he would find this route, with a slight difference as to the names of some of the stages, recorded in the report to Government, of which he possessed a copy. As soon as the General left me I sought out my friend Captain Drummond, to take counsel with him as to the best mode of diverting the former from an attempt certain to be attended with the result of sending one-half of those employed on it to the hospital, and thence to their graves. Captain Drummond felt the full force of all the objections to the scheme;—the selection of the most difficult route, the rains impending, the unsupported position of the detachment even if it got through, and the notorious insalubrity of the jungles to be tra-

versed at that late period of the year,—these, and many other objections were discussed, but we could think of no means to prevent what we both deplored. On being asked to state all this to the General, Captain Drummond replied, that he would have done so if he had not himself been ordered to accompany the detachment. “What then,” said I, “do you think would be the effect of my speaking to him?” The answer was, “I fear that it might make him send double the number now destined for the duty, and the fewer that go the better, as there will be the fewer to suffer.”

We finally decided that nothing could be done; so, with a heavy heart, I saw the gallant party start on its hopeless errand. The result may be told in the words of the historian in the passage before cited :—“A detachment placed under the orders of Major Bucke was sent by water across a district of low jungly land, intersected by numerous rivulets extending about eighty miles to Talak, at the foot of the mountains. From Talak the division made four marches up the ascent, in which they experienced

extreme fatigue, from the rugged and precipitous nature of the road, and the deficiency of water. When within one stage of Thantabain, on the Burmese frontier, it was ascertained that the enemy was posted there in force, and the exhausted state of the detachment, with the impracticability of the route, compelled Major Bucke to retrace his steps and return to Arracan, where disease had now begun its ravages, and very soon incapacitated the army from any further activity." To this it may be added, that Major Bucke himself sickened and died soon after his return, and that the mortality among the rest of the detachment was as great as our fears anticipated.

This is a sad instance of the mischievous influence of that propensity, so common among men who come, with all their ideas previously made up, to the administration of Eastern affairs, to reject information reaching them through those in whose favour they are not professionally prepossessed. Never did this propensity tell with more fatal effect than in the case of General Morrison. The virtues of that amiable man were by none more admired than by those who

deplored his prejudices. Had he cordially co-operated with those who were eager and able to assist him through his local difficulties, he might have reached the Aing Pass and the plains of Upper Ava, where he would have found a field for the exercise of his military talents, and probably have been spared to his friends, instead of merely escaping, broken in health, from Arracan to die at sea on his return to England.

In the course of the month of July the Government gave me the assistance of a deputy in the person of Mr. Charles Paton, an officer of the Bengal army, but long employed as a magistrate in Calcutta, into whose hands, at the beginning of August, I joyfully consigned the management of the details of local administration at Arracan, and proceeded to look after the settlement of the three southern districts of Ramree, Cheduba, and Sandoway. I was accompanied on my watery journey by several Mug chiefs. The boat I lived in was manned by Mugs, and a detachment of Mugs formed my escort. While thus at the mercy of the tribe, I received a letter from my deputy telling me of tales of conspiracy



being afloat, and of a combination between Mugs and Burmese to murder all the British having obtained some credit among my countrymen in the town.

Happily Mr. Paton was not of a disposition to put faith in such figments, and, aided by Captain Drummond (ever first in every useful work), had corrected the bad effect of their circulation.

Beside the Mugs, there was with me a personage destined to act a prominent part for a while in the subsequent scenes on the Irrawaddy—this was the Raj Gooroo, or head Bramin astrologer of the King of Ava. About a year before the war commenced the Raj Gooroo solicited and obtained permission to enter the British territories attended by a few Burmese, one of them a person of some little rank, for the ostensible purpose of a pilgrimage to Gya, in the province of Behar. In the month of January, 1824, when the two English pilots, Chew and Ross, were seized and sent prisoners to Arracan, the Raj Gooroo was, at my suggestion, arrested and detained as a hostage for their safety. In July,

1825, he was sent, under charge of Mr. C. Paton, from Calcutta to Arracan, for the purpose of being forwarded to Rangoon. But he evinced so great an aversion to embarking again, unless accompanied by some English officer acquainted with the habits of a person like himself of Braminical scrupulosity, that it was thought better to take him to Ramree, there to await an opportunity of conveyance to his destination.

The Government was at the same time informed of a son of this personage (of about twenty years of age) being either in ~~or~~ near Calcutta, and it was thought no sin to copy the Burmese policy in so far as to suggest that this young man should be kept in view, in order to give us a firmer hold on the conduct of his father.



## PART II.—AVA.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE SOUTHERN DIVISIONS OF ARRACAN—  
GENERAL VIEW OF OUR RELATIONS WITH THE BURMESE—  
LEAVE RAMREE AND SAIL FOR RANGOON WITH MR. MAN-  
GLES—RAJ GOOROO GOES ROUND AT THE SAME TIME—LEAVE  
RANGOON IN COMPANY WITH COLONEL SALE—PROGRESS UP  
THE IRRAWADDY—REACH PROME—MEETING WITH SIR  
ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL—COMMISSION BEGINS ITS PROCEED-  
INGS—OFFICERS APPOINTED TO CIVIL CHARGE OF DIS-  
TRICTS—INSTRUCTIONS TO THE SAME—LEAVE PROME—  
RAJ GOOROO RELEASED—OVERTURE FROM BURMESE CHIEFS  
AT MELLOON—CONFERENCE FOR THREE DAYS—TREATY  
CONCLUDED—TRUCE OF FIFTEEN DAYS—CAPTAIN TRANT,  
AUTHOR OF “TWO YEARS IN AVA”—RUPTURE OF TRUCE  
—STOCKADE AT MELLOON TAKEN—ADVANCE TOWARDS  
AVA—MR. PRICE, AMERICAN MISSIONARY, DEPUTED BY  
THE KING OF AVA, ARRIVES IN CAMP—CONFERENCE WITH  
HIM—FURTHER ADVANCE—SKIRMISH AT PAGAHM—MR.  
PRICE AGAIN ARRIVES, AND AFTER A CONFERENCE RETURNS  
TO AVA—ADVANCE CONTINUED—MR. PRICE AGAIN APPEARS,  
ACCOMPANIED BY MR. JUDSON—PEACE FINALLY CONCLUDED  
AT YENDABOO—RETURN TO RANGOON.



## PART II.

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### AVA.

It had been intimated to me, when Mr. Paton came down to Arracan, that my services might eventually be required in Pegu, there to be associated in a commission with Sir Archibald Campbell, as the junior member charged with those details of civil management, to which it was impossible that the commander of an army in the field could attend. The expectation thus excited of soon being ordered to the Irrawaddy, naturally drew my attention more directly to the general state of our relations with the Burmese, and, during the two months spent at Ramree, I sought from every quarter for information regarding the region where it seemed probable that I might soon be employed. My situation at Ramree was favourable to the prosecution of these inquiries, for the

local duties were light, and the line of communication with Prome on the Irrawaddy, by a short route along which a post \* was already established, lay open before me. Of the three southern districts of Arracan, two are insular, and the third, Sandoway, is on the main land.

The general aspect of the country differs from that of the Northern provinces, in so far as the view is affected by the sea being always in sight. There is in both divisions the same rankness of vegetation to take from the charm of any nearer prospect, but the view of the wooded heights to the east, rising range above range from Sandoway, with the blue ridge of the Yeomadang mountains in the background, is eminently beautiful.

The island of Cheduba had been in our possession since May, 1824, but Ramree was not taken possession of till April, 1825. Both islands, when my office was established at the

\* According to the practice of the Ultra-Gangetic tribes, this post was kept up by the people of one or two villages, from whom this service was accepted in satisfaction of all demands for revenue. It would not have been carried on by runners hired in the ordinary way.

latter, in the succeeding month of August, were but scantily peopled, notwithstanding that a great part of the population of the continental province of Sandoway had sought refuge on their shores.

A general service battalion of Bengal Native Infantry, and the Honourable Company's frigate, the *Hastings*, constituted the whole armed force required for the protection of these recent conquests.

On my first arrival at Ramree, after four months spent in the lazaret-house of Arracan, I could do nothing but enjoy in peace the delight of seeing comparatively healthful countenances around me; but after a short indulgence in this repose, my attention was steadily directed to the progress of events on the Irrawaddy, where alone it was evident that the war could be brought to a close.

The first thing to arrest my attention, on looking towards that quarter, was the mutual ignorance of the contending parties, as to each other's objects and designs.

For nearly a twelvemonth after our army



landed at Rangoon, there had been no intercourse between our officers and the people of the country, and little or no communication with their rulers, excepting at the point of the bayonet. Neither party seemed to understand the stubborn persevering character of its opponent. The Burmese, regarding us as luxurious and delicate though brave, and seeing our ranks thinned by disease and our men suffering privations, evidently thought we should soon grow weary of the war, and withdraw; while our Commander, supposing each discomfited host to be his opponent's last stake, so frequently reported the total destruction of an ever-reviving foe, that he seemed to be haunted by the ghost of an annihilated army. •

In regard to the feelings of the Burmese of all ranks, nothing had appeared at Arracan to warrant an assumption of their being at all disaffected towards their own sovereign, or favourably inclined towards us. Several of them remained under our rule at Arracan, and there we found them to be orderly, well behaved, and passively obedient; but any attempt to obtain their active coopera-

tion and service had invariably led to their deserting their comfortable houses in the town to seek refuge and exemption in the jungle, even at the most inclement season of the year. The few Burmese of higher rank who remained at Arracan never attempted to propitiate our favour by a disavowal of their allegiance to their own monarch, towards whom I was assured that none of their class was ever heard to utter a word of a disloyal or disrespectful tendency. Individuals of an inferior grade, tempted by high wages, sometimes engaged in our employ, and worked well for their hire ; but both Captain Drummond, the Quartermaster General, and Mr. Paton, the Deputy-Commissioner, observed with myself the general reluctance to engage in any undertaking directly hostile to the interests of their sovereign or country. These characteristics of the race, deduced from observation at Arracan; and confirmed by further inquiry, at Ramree, abated my expectations of any movement in our favour in other parts of the King of Ava's dominions, or of that potentate being speedily humbled to the degree necessary for a pacification upon our terms.

But in truth it seemed that the great obstacle to any early termination of the war on reasonable terms was to be sought for among ourselves. Our talk in the camp, the city, and the court was all in one strain. Perfidious, treacherous, cruel, barbarous, these were the gentle epithets affixed in private or public speaking or writing to the name of the Burmese King; while our own magnanimity and forbearance were dwelt on with complacency, and the leaning of the people's affections to our side was reasoned on as if it were as certain as the law of gravitation itself. The darling project of almost every English mind in Calcutta was that annexation of Pegu, which, after an interval of twenty-seven years, has in these days been accomplished. To me it appeared that to exact the cession of Pegu was unwise, as making peace unattainable; and because the occupation of that country would involve our Government in a new series of political relations, and might eventually compel us, by the irresistible impulse of accidents, to extend our sway over other nations and tribes, with whose very names, probably, we were then but

imperfectly acquainted. Pegu once incorporated with our possessions, a trespass upon its integrity must be resented as promptly as that infringement of our Bengal frontier out of which the war in progress had arisen. The possession of Pegu was likely to lead to a speedy renewal of war with Ava, and an eventual rupture with Siam, a state little likely to prefer us as neighbours to its co-religionists the Burmese.

Of the Peguers all I could learn was, that, however barbarous the conduct of the Burmese at the time of the conquest might have been, yet that the lapse of seventy years, and a greatly improved administration on their part, had, by removing invidious distinctions, and placing conquerors and conquered on a footing of equality, done much towards reconciling the latter to their lot. There seemed reason to believe also, that we could not, without greatly offending the monarch to whom they had transferred their allegiance, draw back to Pegu the descendants of those Peguers who, on their country being conquered, had fled to settle themselves in Siam.

But in truth the cession of Pegu was out of

the question, for no coercion could at that time have reduced the King of Ava to give it up ; therefore that province was to be taken without treaty, and to be held by sheer force. But even to make the monarch yield to more moderate claims, it was clearly necessary that his capital should be menaced.

A march towards Ava was unavoidable ; but there was a contingency attending such a demonstration against which no one thought it worth while to provide, though to me it appeared the most embarrassing of any that could occur. The contingency in question was that of the flight of the King, with his Court, family, and army, from the capital, leaving behind no one person possessing any hold on the affections of the people, or influence sufficient to enable him to maintain himself on the throne unless supported by the power which might set him up. It seemed to me that a feeling of deferential allegiance on the part of a nation towards an individual could not be created by the mere act of his elevation ; and that by substituting a man of our own for the reigning king, if he fled, we

should incur the necessity of holding up a ruler whose obligations to those who had raised him would, by abating his popularity among his own subjects, destroy his efficiency as an ally. I confess that, for these reasons, which, with many others, were frankly communicated at the moment to Government, I had fully made up my mind before leaving Ramree to promote what has been called "the great blunder of the last war;" namely, the halt before reaching the capital; the stopping short of an attainable advantage, in order to wring from the fears of our opponents what we might not have gained from their despair.

On the 16th October I sailed from Ramree, in company with Mr. Ross Donnelly Mangles, of the Bengal Civil Service, now M.P. for Guilford, who had been appointed to be secretary to a commission of which Sir Archibald Campbell was to be the senior, and I the junior member. Of this commission it may be advisable to explain the constitution. It was provided that in all cases of a political nature, the senior commissioner was to have a casting voice; my own part, in the event of a difference of opinion,

being limited to recording the grounds of my dissent. Matters of a purely civil nature were left to my management, with a right reserved to the senior member of recording his opinion when he pleased. The duty of the secretary was, to conduct the correspondence and methodize the proceedings of the commission, so as to have all prepared for the regular administration of whatever extent of territory the chances of war might throw into our hands. It will be seen from this sketch, that the military commander had nothing but a moral restraint imposed upon him ; the political power of the commission being in his own hands, as senior member with a casting voice. In short, the Commander of the forces was subjected to a degree of control similar to that imposed by the constitution of our Indian Government on the Governor-General, who is free to *act* as he likes, though the members of his council may record their reasons for disapproving of his measures.

The object of this provision in the case of the Governor-General is, to qualify, without trammelling, his essentially absolute power ; and

unless tempered by some similar association, it is clear that the almost equally absolute authority of Indian generals in the field must lead to continual and interminable conquest.

In judging the merits of the commission from the following account of its doings in Ava, it is fair to remember that it worked in the darkness of a quarter of a century since, when territorial extension, and the extinction of all Native independence, were not universally considered to be the primary objects of every enlightened Indian statesman's pursuit.

We reached Rangoon on the 9th November, and found that town also the seat of disease, though not in so fell a form as at Arracan. The cholera was prowling about, and in the course of a few days carried off two of the Hindoo servants in my train. On returning to my quarters one day, I inquired for one of these poor creatures, and was told that he had left his salam, with a message that he had gone to the hospital to die. A third servant, a Moosulman, was then taken ill, and would have died like the others if he had gone to the hospital; but, guided by the advice



of one who was to be my fellow-traveller to Prome, I put the sick man into a boat, and carried him away. This good advice came from Colonel, afterwards Sir Robert, Sale, who, wishing to proceed to the head-quarters, then at Prome, proposed to accompany Mr. Mangles and myself on our voyage up the river. Our party of three, with the addition of a young officer commanding the escort, consisting of a company of Madras Native infantry, and the Raj Gooroo and his suite, were embarked in about a hundred canoes; and Colonel Sale kindly took upon himself the whole direction of our little fleet of walnut-shells.

At starting, that gallant officer gave us a proof of his being a physician as well as a soldier, for his practice certainly saved my poor Moosulman servant's life. He had the patient placed in a small canoe, like a floating cradle in size, which was lashed to the somewhat larger boat, serving as a bedroom for me, and dining-hall for our whole party. For several hours after our departure from Rangoon, as the evening tide was carrying us up the river, the Colonel continued to administer little pinches of calomel to the

patient in the canoe, and some liquid medicine, with the virtues of which experience, and frequent exercise of similar benevolence in like cases, had made him acquainted, with such good effect, that next day the man, of whose life we had all despaired, was decidedly convalescent.

As we proceeded on our course, and approached the scene of actual hostilities, I could not help admiring the extreme prudence of Colonel Sale's arrangements. Every afternoon the whole fleet stopped at about 4 P.M. to let the people land and cook their dinners. So soon as this was done, and the evening drew near, the fleet was made to move on, till an open sand-bank or island could be found, to make fast to for the night. The object of this movement was to prevent those who might have observed the halt for dinner from knowing exactly where we were to pass the night. "My object now is," the Colonel said, "to avoid every chance of fighting;" and his arrangements to avert that issue were as efficient as his measures for carrying it through, when needful, always proved.

Our voyage increased in interest as we ad-

vanced. The Irrawaddy is one of the most picturesque of Southern Asiatic streams. So soon as the Delta is passed, the channel ceases to be deformed, like those of the Ganges and Jumna, from their entrance into the plains, by extensive beds of sand. The banks of the Upper Irrawaddy are always well defined, generally high, and in parts, especially near Prome, almost precipitous. The country seemed to be generally deserted; the inhabitants having been called away by the Burmese chief commanding a force, as it was said, of 60,000 men, then drawing round our position at Prome.

Our movements were watched, and we occasionally saw individuals peeping out from points on the banks of the river; while the smoke of burning villages on both sides showed how earnestly the rulers of the land were bent on preventing any portion of the population from holding intercourse with the rebel strangers, as they called the British. That we reached our destination without any adventure, was partly owing to the circumstance of H. M.'s 87th Foot being on the river at the same time with ourselves. This

regiment was moving up in three divisions. Two of these we had passed, and we were gaining upon the third, which was about two miles ahead, when, as we were sitting at breakfast, we heard a brisk firing in the direction of the boats in advance. On looking out, we saw the men of the 87th clambering up the bank to attack a party of the enemy which had fired on them from an ambuscade. Colonel Sale ordered our boats to be stopped, and the sepoy's to land, saying that if we had our fowling-pieces, we had better get them ready. On this my friend, Mr. Mangles, said, "Now, Colonel Sale, do you say this in earnest, or are you only telling us to get out our guns, in order to have a laugh at our expense when we get to Prome?" "Oh no," replied the Colonel, "I do not think we shall have any fighting, but we cannot tell; and a few double-barrelled guns may be very useful."

We proceeded on till we overtook the detachment of the 87th, and then heard that they had been fired on, luckily with little or no effect, by a party of about 1,500 Burmese, who suddenly appeared on the top of a high bank. A curious

circumstance of the affair was, that the boatmen, all genuine Burmese, though serving us for very high wages, were so struck with the conduct of the soldiers of the 87th in springing on shore, and rushing up to attack their assailants, that they clapped their hands, to express their admiration.

On the day after this occurrence, which took place on or about the 25th of November, we reached the head quarters at Prome. In the evening we all dined with my future colleague, Sir Archibald Campbell, who occupied a house on one of the most prominent platforms running along the summit of the abruptly steep bank of the river, and commanding a beautiful prospect of the wooded heights on the opposite side of the Irrawaddy, sprinkled, as night advanced, with the watch-fires of the blindly beleaguering foe.

The scene was strikingly illustrative of the disparity between the purely Asiatic, and the European mind. There, within sight of a party of English gentlemen sitting over their claret, as much at their ease as if they had been at Richmond or Greenwich, and with a fair share

of the comforts of civilized life about them, lay a large host whose leaders, in their besotted pride, were forming plans to prevent these strangers from escaping to their ships. Many circumstances had combined to work the hostile chiefs into this presumptuous frame of mind. About the middle of November the enemy's force was at Watigaon, fifteen miles distant from Prome, and consequently beyond the reach of an easy march. An unsuccessful attack on their position made by Colonel McDowall of the Madras army on the 15th of November, with a force composed exclusively of Madras Native infantry, encouraged the Burmese leaders to advance within a few miles of the town. Though the result of this failure was good, it may be questioned whether it was right to send Native troops alone on such an enterprise. Doubtless the motive for so doing was to give the officers of the Madras army an opportunity of distinguishing themselves, but that army does not consist only of natives, and if neither of the two European regiments belonging to it were at hand for the duty, some of His Majesty's troops

in the pay of the Honourable Company ought to have been employed in their stead.

Though for this reason the measure of detaching Colonel McDowall with a purely sepoy force does not merit praise, yet, as has been said, the result was most advantageous. To increase the blind confidence of the enemy, boats were collected, trees were felled to form abatis, and earthen breastworks were thrown up. All of these seeming preparations for defence or flight were left open to the inspection of as many spies as those without liked to send into our lines. The result is known. On the 1st of December Sir A. Campbell moved out, and let the poor Burmese chieftains see what a lion they had been surrounding with their toils.

Having now got upon the track already trodden by many able professional narrators, I shall henceforward only allude to military events as these may throw light on the collateral series of political incidents, or remind me of any little circumstance, of a nature too trifling for the more regular historian to notice. The only reminiscence, of this latter sort connected with

Prome is, that in the physiognomy of the Shans, a tribe brought from the far east, we found a striking resemblance to the description given by a monkish writer, cited by Gibbon, of the Huns, of whose eyes he says that they were "*puncta magis quam lumina.*"

Though in the midst of warlike bustle, the Commission had broken ground while at Prome, and commenced its regular proceedings on the 30th of November. Captains Fenwick and Alves, of the Madras army, were respectively appointed to the civil charge of the province of Martaban and Bassein, a deputy being placed under the former at Yé. At the suggestion of the senior commissioner, Major Nicholson, of the Bengal army, was appointed to the civil charge of Rangoon, in subordination to Brigadier Smelt commanding at that post. Letters containing instructions for their guidance, suited to the peculiar circumstances of their several districts, were addressed to each of these officers, by the secretary, Mr. Mangles. Among the items of revenue to which Captain Fenwick's attention was called, the most peculiar was the farm of the esculent bird's nests



found in the islands dependent on the province of Martaban. Major Nicholson was instructed, among other things, how to find out the exact amount of duties received on the royal account, upon all Teak timber at Rangoon: Captain Alves was told to proceed to Bassein and report the state of things in that province, then for the first time separated from Rangoon; and all three were requested to regard "the history, the political and social condition, topography, resources, population, and general statistics of the towns and districts committed to their charge, as peculiarly the objects of their investigation and report."

On the 4th December the advance began, and on the 7th of that month Major Evans, of the Madras army, was appointed to the civil charge of Prome and the surrounding villages.

The instructions to Major Evans chiefly related to the best way of commuting all demands for revenue into supplies for the use of the army. One petition referred to him is worth noticing, as a specimen of the Burmese system of internal administration.

The petitioner and his dependents were ele-

phant catchers and drivers. They held two villages, one to the north, the other to the south of Prome, free of all cesses or levies, on condition of furnishing five elephants annually to the royal stud. They had supplied more than that number for our public service, having brought in three a few days before they presented their petition. The two villages contained a hundred houses; twenty of these supplied men to catch wild elephants, whose expenses were defrayed by a contribution paid by the eighty householders who remained at home. Their complaint was, that the Miossoogree, or head man of Prome, had, in disregard of their exemption from further cess, required them to pay a sum of 100 rupees, notwithstanding that the conditions under which they held their villages had been fulfilled.

Major Evans was requested to make this petition the subject of a close inquiry, and was also recommended "to endeavour so to define the jurisdiction of each Miossoogree under his control, as to prevent the usurpation by any encroaching or designing individual, of such

power or influence over the neighbouring chiefs of village divisions, as might enable him, if so inclined, to draw them into rebellion, or to extend his exactions beyond the limits of his peculiar district."

On the 15th November a simple set of rules for their guidance in the performance of their judicial, magisterial, and fiscal duties was issued to the several officers in civil charge of the provinces of Pegu and Prome.

These specimens of the civil doings of the Commission, will suffice to show how it worked in one of its departments; it must now be shown how it got on in the other.

On the 19th December, the camp being then at Meaday, the Commission held its first political consultation. Our relations with Siam, and the reported intention of that power to send an army to our aid, was one of the subjects considered, and Captain Williamson, of the Madras army, was appointed to accompany the Siamese General, called the Rown Rown, in the event of his advancing (as he never did) to take an active part in the war.

On the same day it was also determined to set at liberty the Raj Gooroo, or Burmese King's chief Hindoo astrologer, who had been sent from Calcutta to Arracan, and had thence come round with me to Rangoon. Many of the captured chiefs had previously been released by the Commander of the forces, and the Raj Gooroo was rather a *détenu* than a prisoner of war, as he entered our territories by permission, in a time of peace, and was only arrested as a hostage for the pilots, Messrs. Chew and Ross, when they were seized, as before described, at Mungdow-on-the-Naf.

It seemed doubtful whether the subsequent detention of a person so situated were quite justifiable, and therefore his immediate release being resolved on, it was also decided, at his own request, to furnish him with such a written memorandum of our objects, and views as he might be able to exhibit at Ava when called on for information on these points.

The following were the heads which it was decided should form the subject of these memoranda:—

1st, That no overtures of peace would be

received, until all Englishmen, Americans, and Europeans of whatever nations, as well as all soldiers or subjects of the British Government in India, should have been released, in conformity with the promise given during the conference at Newbenziek. \*

2dly, That although the rejection by the Court of Ava of the terms of peace offered for their acceptance at Newbenziek had entirely released the British Government from all obligations to abide by those terms on the opening of any new negotiation, and although the British army was at the moment in a situation greatly more commanding than it occupied during that conference, and although a large tract of country had since that period been subjected to the British arms, and had peaceably submitted to our rule, yet, ~~that~~ the Commissioners were still willing to grant the Court of Ava peace upon liberal terms.

3dly, That any communication which the Raj Gooroo might be authorized by his master to make to the Commissioners regarding the preceding heads, would be received, if sent down

with a flag of truce; and that any letter so despatched, without delay, after the arrival of the Raj Gooroo at Ava, would probably meet the Commissioners at Pagahm Mew.

The "purwanna," or order addressed to the Gooroo on his liberation, was written in two columns, the Burmese original text being in the one, and a Persian version of the same in the other.

It was thought desirable to have a statement of our real designs written in an Asiatic language like the Persian, known to ourselves, and likely to prove intelligible to some individuals at Ava, instead of having all our communications expressed in English, which the Burmese could not read, and in Burmese, which the English did not understand. We were afterwards told by the American missionary, Mr. Price, that this document was laid by the Gooroo before the King of Ava, who had the Persian column explained to him by a native of Persia residing at the capital, and declared it to be the first written authenticated statement of our designs and objects which he had perused.

The conference at Newbenziek, so often alluded

to in the immediately preceding passages, took place in the early part of October, in consequence of a letter addressed by Sir Archibald Campbell, by order of Government, to the ministers of the Court of Ava, and so promptly responded to, that, in the General's own words,\* "the time had scarcely elapsed for the reception of an answer when such did actually arrive." The meeting, the ceremonial, and the discussions are well described in the History so often cited. The abortive issue of the conference was mainly owing to the yet unsubdued pride of the Burmese; but our own negotiators seemed to have been cramped in their proceedings by their reluctance to part with Pegu. The wealth, the resources, the fertility of that province were dwelt upon with fondness, while the zeal of the people in our cause was described as manifesting itself in rejoicings at the renewal of hostilities. From the moment of my arrival at Rangoon, I had searched in vain for sufficient indications of this very strong feeling in our favour. All I found out was, that the people were ready to serve as

\* Wilson's Hist. vol. iii. p. 134.

boatmen and coolies for very high wages, and that of those so serving the greater number were not natives of Pegu, but pure Burmese.

That under the influence of this prepossession against the most necessary condition of peace, namely, the restoration of Pegu, the tone of the negotiations of October should have been such as to leave no room for further attempts at pacific adjustment, seemed so very improbable, that I was happy to see the delivery of the explanatory “purwanna,” or order to the Gooroo on his liberation, sanctioned by the Commission.

This measure was followed by speedy results. On the 26th December, the following letter was received from the Burmese Commander at Melloon :—

“ Kolein Méngee writes to the English Surdars, Commanders of the armies. •

“ The Gooroo Maha Raja Rajindra Aga Maha Dumma Rajah Gooroo, who went on a charitable mission to the groves of the Peepul trees, (*i. e.* to Gyah,) arrived on the 16th Piasola, 1187, at this place. From his representations we have gathered everything connected with the two



great countries, and their mutual interests. All the Burmese Surdars think that if they can communicate with the Surdars of the English, it will be well; that thus the welfare of the country may be promoted, and that it will be the part of wise and sensible men to endeavour to bring matters to an adjustment, and thus benefit the soldiers and the subjects of both powers.

“With a view to this end we have sent a note by the Secretary of the cavalry, Meemioo Sooree Kio Den, by whom we hope to receive a letter in reply from the English Surdars.”

To this letter a courteous reply was returned, stating that, on the arrival of the English army at a convenient spot, on the east bank of the Irrawaddy, an officer should be sent with a flag of truce, to arrange with any of the Burmese chiefs the time and place for a conference. On the 28th December, Lieutenant-Colonel Tidy, the Adjutant-General, and Lieutenant Smith, R.N., having visited the Burmese position, returned with a letter proposing that the conference should take place on the 24th January. To this it was replied, that the remote date was altogether

inadmissible, and that the Burmese Commander, if serious in his wish for a conference, must send a messenger with a more reasonable proposal, before sunset that day, to Patanagoh, directly opposite to Melloon, where the British army would by that time be. On the morning of the 29th December, a letter came from Kolein Ménégee, begging that the English gentlemen would themselves fix a day for the conference. The reply to this was, that at noon on the ensuing day the Commissioners would receive the Burmese chiefs on the spot where the English Commander's flag-staff then stood. At a later hour of the same day, there came a proposal from the Burmese chiefs that the meeting should take place in a boat to be anchored in the centre of the river, between the two armies, in which officers deputed "for the purpose might discuss the points in dispute." The reply to this was, that the Commissioners could not delegate the powers of negotiating to others, or consent to meet any but the highest officer of the Burmese Government, namely, Kolein Ménégee himself; but that an unarmed steamer should be anchored

in the middle of the river, to serve as the place of meeting.

On the 30th December, a letter came from the Burmese chiefs, saying, " We built an excellent house for the former conference at Newbenziek, and for the present occasion we will prepare in like manner a large boat, in which, with fifty unarmed men on each side, we may meet in the centre of the stream." The reply was as follows :—

" The British Commissioners have received Kolein Ménége's letter of this morning, and are willing to gratify his wishes as to the place of meeting. If he will have a suitable boat ready at 2 P.M. this day, the British Commissioners will meet the Burmese negotiators in the manner proposed, in the centre of the stream. The British Commissioners have also perused a brief note addressed to the Burmese messenger now in the camp, apologising for the accidental explosion of a gun in the Burmese lines, and beg to assure Kolein Ménége that they are perfectly satisfied with the explanation given."

There was a little accidental firing to be

accounted for on both sides. When we reached Patanagoh on the morning of the 30th December, we found that our encampment was to stand on a spot directly opposite to the Burmese stockade at Melloon. The banks on our side were bold and rugged, while the Burmese stockade stood on an inclined plane, with only one rocky projection at the angle furthest down the river. Here the channel is so narrow that every boat ascending the river had to pass immediately under the guns of the party posted on this projection. Our whole flotilla was working its way through this watery defile, piloted by Burmese officers in canoes, when suddenly the report of a few of our guns was heard to proceed from a point apparently about two miles up the river. At this moment, the Commodore, Sir James Brisbane, landed, full of anxiety for the safety of his men, lest any excuse should be afforded to the Burmese for taking advantage of their position, with the flotilla in a manner at their mercy. The firing, which had originated in a mistake, was speedily stopped; but it is a proof of the sincere desire of the Burmese for a conference,

that they never complained of the accidental irregularity on our side, and apologised for that which had happened on their own.

At two o'clock in the afternoon of the 30th of December, the first meeting took place on board of a spacious boat provided by the Burmese, and much better fitted for the accommodation of the number of people assembled, than any vessel in our flotilla would have been.

There were many among us who accounted it an undue concession on our part, that the conference was allowed to be held in a boat furnished by the Burmese, though no similar objection was made to the previous meeting in October having taken place in a house built by them for the purpose, at Newbenziek. Perhaps the greater risk of peace ensuing made the critics more quicksighted on this than on the former occasion.

The Commodore, Sir James Brisbane, having been invited to take his place, as second member of the Commission, there were three negotiators on the British side, to meet Kolein Ménége, with whom we had latterly been in communi-

cation, and the Kee Woonghee, who had taken a leading part on the former occasion at Newbenziek.

The Senior Commissioner, Sir A. Campbell, opened the conference, by asking the Burmese chiefs to state whether they were empowered to arrange terms of peace without further reference to the King at Ava. The reply to this was, "Whatever I (Kolein Ménégee) do, my acts are as the acts of the King. We are the two plenipotentiaries appointed to settle the terms of peace."

After a few other queries, they were asked if they would rather have questions put to them publicly or privately; on which they said, "If privately, it would be a little better." Upon this, the junior officers on both sides withdrew.

Kolein Ménégee not having been at the previous meeting in October, the terms of peace then offered were recapitulated for his information.

The Senior Commissioner then, after reminding them of their having been warned at Newbenziek not to expect to have exactly the same

terms again offered to their acceptance, proceeded to tell them, that in addition to what had then been demanded, we had now to require the cession of the Tennasserim provinces on the coast. Their reply, after conferring together in whispers, was, "Upon a former occasion the attempt to make peace was rendered futile by your extravagant demands, and you are now again asking too much. It would be better to ask for what we can reasonably grant." A long conversation ensued, but it was found impossible to induce the Burmese negotiators to specify distinctly what points they were disposed to concede; so, to get more readily to a conclusion, the plan of separate questions was tried, and the following dialogue ensued:—

Do you cede the four provinces of Arracan?

We do.

Will you cede Assam?

To this no distinct reply could be obtained, and after half an hour of fruitless talk, a note-book was produced, in which one of the chiefs made a memorandum of the provinces required in cession, and of the sum of money

demanding by us in reimbursement of the expenses of the war. It was at last agreed to adjourn the meeting until two P.M. on the ensuing day. The two chiefs then spontaneously apologised for having been too late in arriving at the boat of conference, imputing it to their different mode of reckoning the hours, and to their not having seen the signal flag.

The second day's discussion brought matters a little nearer to an adjustment. A curious circumstance occurred in the middle of the deliberations. The boat of conference had an outrigger, like a balcony, on which many of the attendants were seated. One of these, in lighting a cigar, let a spark fall on some loose gunpowder, which made a slight explosion. The chiefs were much irritated; and one of their number, named Muha Silwa, after calling out "Who did that?" and being answered, exclaimed, "Cut his hand off;" and then, as if thinking better of it, added, "Cut his head off;" and this order would have been instantly acted on, but for the quickness with which Sir A. Campbell,



understanding from the interpreter what was passing, interceded for the unfortunate smoker's pardon.

The cession of Arracan, agreed to on the preceding day, was again brought under discussion. The Burmesè chiefs were told that the possession of that country by us was absolutely necessary to prevent future disputes, as in no other way could a well-defined boundary like that of the Yeomadong range be interposed between the two States. At last they yielded, but said,—“If you take Arracan, pray make no mention of money.”

On this latter subject they expatiated with great earnestness; and at last one of the chiefs said privately to Mr. Sarkies, the interpreter,—“How can we pay so large a sum? We are ashamed to confess it here,—all our money has been expended in the payment of soldiers.” Upon this, all the junior officers and attendants withdrew, and the conference became very private.

Sir A. Campbell then told the two chiefs, that in consideration of the alleged distress of the

country, the Commissioners would take it upon themselves to reduce the money demand from two crores of rupees (or two millions sterling) to one. They agreed to meet this demand if they could; but begged to defer their final reply till the next day, stating that four lacs of rupees (40,000*l.*) was the utmost that they could immediately command; and asked whether, in the event of payment, the British army would retire, and to what point. On this they were warned, that though the whole sum sought for were paid, the army could not retire until the ratified treaty, and all the British and American prisoners were brought down from Ava.

It being understood that the amount to be paid was settled, leaving the instalments only to be discussed, the different items of territorial cession were gone through *seriatim*. To each query on this subject they replied,—“It is done.” The remaining points of the proposed treaty were then talked about. Upon the article respecting the interchange of political residents in Bengal and Ava, Koleh Méngée said,—“I like that well. Let the English send a quiet

person, not ambitious or quarrelsome, one who will not make disputes ; and let the English Resident learn the Burmese, and the Burmese Agent the English language, so that there may be no need of the interposition of an interpreter."

It was then settled that fifteen days should be allowed for the ratification of the treaty by the King and the Lootoo, or Council, Kolein Ménégee distinctly stating that the King and the Lootoo would confirm whatever was signed by himself and the Kee Woonghee.

The next day a letter came from Kolein Ménégee, apologising, on the plea of indisposition, for not attending at the conference, and begging that an English doctor might be sent over to prescribe for him. Dr. Knox, of the Madras medical establishment, a gentleman who had made considerable progress in the acquirement of the Burmese language, was sent on this duty, and on his return reported that Kolein Ménégee was really unwell.

The third conference took place on the 3d January, 1826. An attempt was made to bring all the points already settled again under dis-

cussion; but the Senior Commissioner put a stop to this, and told the Burmese chiefs that the question of the instalments of the money payment alone remained to be considered. In the course of the conversation, Kolein Ménégee said,—“There are three difficulties in the way of negotiation. In the first place, we cannot converse together except through the medium of interpreters; secondly, the day closed at the last conference before we could come to any conclusion, and consequently we were much hurried; and thirdly, because you demand from us the reimbursement of the whole expenses of the war.” On this it was explained by the interpreter, Mr. Sarkies, that the sum demanded did not amount to ten per cent. upon the whole outlay of the British Government on account of the war. They seemed very incredulous; and, on being told of a single ship being paid for at the rate of 25,000 rupees for a single month, Kolein Ménégee said he had freighted ships himself, and knew something of the matter, and had never heard of anything so extravagant.

The two chiefs then prayed, in almost abject

terms, for a further abatement of the sum demanded, namely, one crore, or one million sterling. The Kee Woonghee said,—“This is silver that we are called upon to pay, not rice, and we could not collect any very large quantity of the latter in so short a period as you talk of allowing us; how then can we pay such an enormous sum? The English must be generous, and lighten the demand.” After many remarks on the impoverished state of the country, he said,—“That term of the treaty we must ourselves execute, for we dare not communicate it to the King. We must pay the money ourselves; for should the King hear of such a stipulation, he would probably put us to death; of that we must take our chance. We speak the truth—we have not the money to give.”

The treaty, fairly transcribed in the Burmese language, was now brought in, and Kolein Ménégee took it into his own hands to read it to himself. In the interim the Kee Woonghee said,—“You must allow us time to pay this money: silver is not like rice.” They then asked if gold, rubies, and jewels, would be

received in payment, and were answered in the affirmative; and at last they agreed to the instalments as stated in the treaty, engaging to make good the full payment within two years from the evacuation, by the British, of Rangoon. The treaty was then signed by the Commissioners on both sides, and for a while our political labours were suspended.

In proof of the good feeling that prevailed among those of different professions and habits, who were here united in one common duty, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of inserting the following copy of a public resolution recorded by the Commission on the 3d January, 1826 :—

“ At the suggestion of the Senior Commissioner, it was unanimously resolved, that the thanks of the Commission should be returned to their Secretary, Mr. Mangles, for the zeal, assiduity, and talent with which he has throughout the conference discharged the duties of his office. ,

“ (Signed) A. CAMPBELL, *Major-General*.

J. BRISBANE, *Commodore*.

T. C. ROBERTSON, *Civil Commissioner*.”

The succeeding fortnight was one of continued relaxation and almost revelry. The army, which generally moved in two divisions, one about ten miles in advance of the other, was during that period united in one encampment. The weather was delightful, and field sports and amusements of every kind were pursued with the more relish, from the opportunity of enjoying them having been unexpected. The Burmese of every grade soon began to cross over from Melloon, and many of their chiefs took part in pony races, conducted with all the method that ever enters into British sport. It was not always easy to make them understand the laws of the turf, and once or twice awkward disputes seemed likely to arise; but on the whole good-humour prevailed, and it seemed as if language alone were wanting to convert the two recently belligerent parties into hearty friends.

It is narrated of an enlightened Sultan of the last century, that he said to a European ambassador,—“If ever I turn Christian, I must be a Roman Catholic, for I don't know of a single good Protestant wine;” and had their geogra-

physical knowledge been equal to that of the Turk, the same sentiment would probably have occurred to our Burmese guests, for certainly, of all the products of civilization, none commanded their admiration to the same extent as a bottle of champagne. One of their chiefs, named Muha Silwa, (the same as ordered the cigar-smoker's head to be cut off during the conference,) was the most remarkable for his devotion to this enchanting beverage; but none who entered our camp, and were invited to our tables, seemed insensible to its charms. The chiefs of the most consideration, it may be mentioned, never condescended to such familiarity, and Muha Silwa, though a man of rank, was said to fill at Court the post of the King's Jester.

The fortnight soon passed away; and as it drew to its close, speculation became rife about the chances of a ratification of the treaty. The extreme earnestness of the negotiators, and the abject tone of their solicitations for an abatement of our pecuniary demands, left little room to doubt the sincerity of their own individual wishes; but the frank avowal of the Kee



Woonghee at our last meeting, that they dared not communicate the money payment article to the King, warranted an apprehension that they might have overrated their own influence when they engaged for his performing whatever they might promise. The recollection also of what took place in the war with Nepal, in 1816, when, after the conclusion of a treaty, Sir David Ochterlony was obliged to take the field, and advance towards the capital, in order to extort a ratification, happily occurred to us in time to prevent two regiments, the Royals and the 89th Foot, being sent back, as was at one time meditated, to Prome.

On the 17th January, one day before the date fixed for the delivery of the ratified treaty, the release of the British and American prisoners, and the payment of the first instalment, a deputation of four chiefs, one of them an Atawoon, or ~~Privy~~ Privy Counsellor, arrived in camp, and were received in the General's tent. After going through the usual ceremonies of Burmese politeness, such as presenting pieces of silk to the British officers present, the Atawoon declared

that the money to pay the instalment was ready, but that some delay might occur about the prisoners, in which case it was hoped that the British authorities would be content to take hostages for their speedy release. On being pressed for a more explicit declaration, the Atawoon said there had been some mistake about the treaty and the prisoners; he knew not what; but he was sure they would arrive in a day or two.

He afterwards admitted that no communication had been received from Ava since the despatch of the treaty from Melloon. He was asked how this could tally with what he had said of the money to pay the instalment being ready. He replied, that the money was partly public, partly private; that the chiefs had some money belonging to the King, and some of their own, enough to make up four lacs of ~~tickals~~ (48,000 $\frac{1}{2}$ ), which they were ready to pay, ~~giving~~ at the same time hostages for the prisoners; ~~and~~ then they hoped that the British would retire to Prome. He was told that without the delivery of the ratified treaty and the prisoners, ~~the~~

British army could not retire one step. He then prayed that the money and hostages might be received, our army remaining in its actual position; and ended by saying,—“We will not ask you to retire to Prome, but do not be hasty in your measures. Give us time.”

On this indefinite halt being refused, the Atawoon begged for a delay of six or seven days, saying, that the chiefs at Melloon had done their utmost to get the prisoners down, and had sent three messengers to hasten their arrival.

The Atawoon was finally dismissed, with an admonition to urge his superiors to exert themselves to fulfil their engagements on the following day, as no attention could be paid to vague and evasive proposals of delay.

On the ensuing morning, that of the 18th, the date on which, in conformity with what was settled on the 3d of January, we had to expect an interview with the Burmese chiefs at 2 p.m., it was determined to tender the following terms for their acceptance:—

1. That if they would pay four lacs of tickals (48,000L.), the first stipulated instalment, by noon

on the next day, giving such hostages as the Commissioners should select; and agree to evacuate Melloon by sunrise on the 20th of January; the British army would suspend active offensive operations until then.

2. That the British army, after occupying Melloon, would commence its march upon the capital, the hostages accompanying their camp; but that the Commissioners would receive and act upon the treaty signed on the 3d of January, if ratified by the King and Lootoo, and sent down with the British and American prisoners.

3. That the British army would endeavour to avoid hostilities, but would use force to overcome any opposition it might encounter.

Scarcely had this resolution been come to, when a letter arrived from Kolein Méngee and the Kee Woonghee, apologising on the plea of indisposition for not attending at the hour appointed for the conference. On this, to remove every possibility of a mistake, it was determined that a deputation headed by the Secretary, Mr. Mangles, should cross over to Melloon with a written translation in the Burmese language,

of the above resolution of the Commissioners, to show to the chiefs, and obtain if possible their promise in writing to perform what was required of them within the period specified. Mr. Mangles was accompanied on his mission by Major Jackson, the Quartermaster General, Lieutenant Smith, of the Royal Navy, and Mr. Assistant-Surgeon Knox.

\* It was late before Mr. Mangles returned, and the following is an abridgement of his own account of what passed during his visit to Melloon. Though courteously received at landing, and conducted to the hall of audience, it is doubtful whether the two chiefs would have met him if he had not refused, at such a crisis, to communicate with any subordinate authority. When they appeared, Kolein Ménégee and the Kee Woonghee repeated nearly the same excuses for the non-performance of their promises, as had on the preceding day been urged on their part by the Atawoon, adding that they were deterred by shame, from meeting the British Commissioners. The written paper was then handed to Kolein Ménégee, and a brief pause

ensued. After writing a few words in his notebook, and delivering them to his colleagues, that chief turned to Mr. Mangles, and told him that a greater personage than himself or the Kee Woonghee was in the vicinity, namely, Memia Bo, the King's brother, with whom they must consult, and therefore\* wished to defer their answer till the morrow.

Mr. Mangles, telling them that he had no power to agree to any modification of the terms prescribed by his superiors, rose as if to depart.

This movement had the desired effect of bringing matters to a point, and Kolein Ménégee entreated the deputation to be seated, saying that he himself would take the letter to Memia Bo, and ask his opinion regarding the terms proposed. Half-an-hour was allowed for this purpose, and in half of that time Kolein Ménégee returned, and began to ask questions about the occupation of Mellon by the British, and the treatment of the hostages. In talking of this latter point, he offered a compliment upon the conduct of the English towards those Burmese who had fallen into their hands as prisoners.

Still the Burmese ministers refused to sign the written acceptance of the proffered terms, and as the day was drawing to a close, Mr. Mangles, wisely judging that longer parley would be useless, solemnly warned them of the nature of the only alternative left by their conduct to the British Commissioners, and taking particular care to have it intimated in the most clear and unequivocal language that the truce would end at midnight, withdrew, with the other members of the deputation, from the hall of audience, and returned to our camp at Patanagoh.

The events of the next fortnight fall properly within the province of the military historian; but it may not be uninteresting to know how scenes of actual warfare appeared to the eyes of unprofessional spectators who watched their progress in inglorious safety, and therefore I will venture to relate a little of what came under my own observation on the renewal of hostilities at Melloon.

The liveliest narrative of all that occurred on this occasion is to be found in a work entitled, "Two Years in Ava," by Captain Trant. The

author of that clever and unpretending volume, was a young officer of great ability, and of a strength of character far beyond his years. Very juvenile in appearance, he seemed even younger than he was, and that was something short of twenty. Yet such was the natural ascendancy of his character, that he commanded the confidence of every individual in the camp, and there was no one on whose report the General placed more reliance, or whose lead the private more readily followed. He was a son of Sir Nicholas Trant, whose name appears so often in the earlier annals of the Peninsular war, and, at the time we are treating of, a Lieutenant in H. M.'s 38th Foot, though, as attached to the Quartermaster General's department, he was always designated as Captain.

The risks he ran were, perhaps, greater than those of any other officer in camp, as he was continually employed in advance in exploring, and never failed to take a prominent part in the attack of the stockade which he had previously reconnoitered. Ever in the front, and ever conspicuous from his cocked hat and feather, his



escape, without a scratch, seemed almost miraculous. Had he but been blessed with a stronger frame of body, there was no distinction to which he might not have risen; but his career was brief as it was brilliant; and after escaping, though not unscathed, from the climate of Ava and the West Indies, he contracted a fever in Greece, and returned to England to breathe his last, in the year 1836. It will presently be seen how the course of my narrative has recalled this distinguished young officer to mind, and how natural it is to dwell for a moment on such a recollection.

From midnight of the 18th January both armies recommenced their warlike arrangements. Our heavy artillery was landed, and brought into fitting position on the bank of the river; while the busy hammering in the stockade "gave dreadful note of preparation," and warned us of the resistance preparing for our troops on the morrow. It was decided that the embarkation for the passage of the river should take place at a point about a mile above the camp, in order that the current might bring one division

of the boats to shore immediately under the stockade at Melloon. At the point of embarkation, the force employed was to be divided into two detachments, one under Colonel Hunter Blair, of H. M. 87th, to cross straight over, to approach the stockade on the land side; the other, under Colonel Sale, to drop down the stream, and attack the position on its river front.

Mr. Mangles and I rode along with the detachment to the place of embarkation, and there shook hands with the officers as they took their seats in the boats. We were both of us struck with the deportment of our military friends.

There was a gravity in their looks and manner, expressive at once of a consciousness of the difficulty of the enterprise before them, and a settled determination that it should, at whatever cost, be accomplished. There was no jesting, no levity, all was done with thoughtful calmness and composure, as becomes reflecting men, who stand "on the rough edge of battle ere it join."

The party under Colonel Hunter Blair was soon lost to our view, but the movement of that led by Colonel Sale was easily observable from the shore.

When the boats pushed off, we rode back towards the camp, watching, with the keenest interest, the progress down the river of the division containing the little brigade composed of H. M.'s 13th and 38th Foot, both together mustering less than 500 men. At about a hundred yards in advance of this flotilla, a man-of-war's gig, rowed by English sailors, conveyed Colonel Sale, Lieutenant Dickson a young officer of the Bengal Engineers, and Captain Trant. Though we knew the stockade to be full of men, and, from its standing on a slope, the whole of the interior could be distinguished from our side, yet not a living creature was to be seen, so completely was its garrison of at least 10,000 men stowed away in deep trenches, dug to shelter them from our cannonade. At last, as the little boat leading the flotilla came fully in front of the enemy's position, the firing from their side began, and the surface of the river bubbled like that of a pond in a hail-storm. We certainly gave up all our friends in the man-of-war's gig for lost, and yet only two, Colonel Sale and Lieutenant Dickson, were

wounded, and two sailors were killed. The flotilla pushed on, but not with a uniform speed, so that some boats reached the shore a few minutes before the others. The men who arrived first, appeared to us to jump out and throw themselves on their faces, keeping up a fire more with a view to cover themselves with the smoke, than with any hope of injuring the enemy; and this lasted for about ten minutes.

When all were landed, the whole party, not quite 500 in number, sprang up like one man, and rushing at the stockade, which was only some fifty feet from the water's brink, climbed over, we could not distinguish how, and in one instant the whole garrison appeared to us to be in full flight.

As he was getting over the wall, of course among the foremost, Captain Trant said, that, occupied as he was, he could not help laughing at the following query from an Irish soldier:—"Ah, Captain Trant, and why didn't you make pace now?" The whole affair proved less serious than there was every reason to expect, for the

stockade was strong, and the garrison numerous and well armed.

On returning to my tent I there found Colonel Sale sitting on my bed stript to the waist, and with his shoulder black, bleeding, and swollen. He was cheerful and chatty as usual, and made light of his wound, which, however, would probably have proved fatal, if he had been standing up, instead of being seated in the boat, when he was hit. As it was, the ball having only gone through the fleshy part of the shoulder, he was well again in ~~three~~ <sup>four</sup> weeks.

Among the consequences of the capture of the stockade, was a discovery that the two original treaties, in the Burmese and English languages, had never been sent to Ava. These papers were found, along with every document that had passed at Newbenziek, in the house which had been occupied by the King's brother, Memia Bo, and much stress was laid upon this circumstance, as proving the treachery and perfidy of that prince and the two chiefs with whom we had recently held so many conferences.

This was the commonly received solution of every difficulty, in our dealings with the Burmese in those days, but it did not suffice to explain the inconsistency detected in the conduct of the chiefs at Melloon.

The conference had originated with themselves; they left it to us to fix a day for its commencement, and descended to entreaties for a mitigation of terms, urged with the most abject earnestness of manner. No adequate motive could be assigned for such gratuitous degradation, if delay alone had been their object. It was certain also that they sent off two messengers to Ava immediately after the conference, and latterly had despatched a third to hasten the return of a reply to this first communication.

Many other circumstances united to prove that the two first messengers certainly made the King acquainted with the territorial concessions exacted by us at Melloon; and that the money article was what they feared to communicate, as, indeed, the Kee Woonghee had, towards the end of the last conference, almost warned us would be the case. The fact of a large sum of money

being found in the stockade, strongly supported the conjecture that their intention was, if they could have got the prisoners back from Ava, to have paid the first instalment, and tried to persuade us to accept of the signature of the Prince Memia Bo, as tantamount to that of the King his brother, for the ratification of the treaty.

Though no extenuating circumstances could modify the general opinion in our camp of their gross and deliberate perfidy, still the members of the Commission saw reasons for not implicitly subscribing to this condemnatory conclusion. Some allowance ought, as it seemed to them, to be made for the singular situation in which the parties concerned had stood, between the mild but unbending austerity of the British Government, and the ferocious arrogance of their own sovereign. That they had tried to trim between the two, and had overstated their own influence to us, and understated the real terms of the treaty to their monarch, was evident; but bad as this subterfuge was, it did not appear to constitute such a case of atrocious treachery as to preclude all future negotiation, and therefore it

was resolved to forward the original treaties, with a short note, to the address of Kolein Méngee and the Kee Woonghee, stating, that the Commissioners had the pleasure to send them two documents, which, in the hurry of their retreat, they had dropped, and might eventually wish to recover.

The difficulty, however, was to find a messenger to carry this little note to the Burmese chiefs, who might not be in a mood to receive the bearer of it kindly. This was got over in the following manner:—

A Burmese, who had held charge of the granaries at Melloon, was found, on the morning after the fight, sitting by his wounded son in a retired corner of the captured stockade. Knowing something of the British character, he addressed himself to the first officer who happened to pass near him, and prayed to have his son removed to our camp for the benefit of surgical advice. This was done, and his son's leg was amputated. Every attention was paid to the patient as if he had been one of our own people, and the father, in return for this, volunteered to be the bearer of



the despatch. He went away, leaving his son in our hospital, and returned in a few days with a note from the two Burmese chiefs, acknowledging the receipt of the documents, but adding, "that beside the papers, they had left some money behind them in the stockade, and this they hoped the British Commissioners would kindly return to them."

This keeper of the granaries assured us that the two chiefs did send two messengers to Ava on the conclusion of the treaty, and afterwards a third, to hurry their return. He seemed to think the liberation of the British prisoners at Ava to have been the ~~article~~ least clearly explained by the chiefs, and that it was the Raj Gooroo who told the King that this was indispensable. But documentary evidence against this personage also was found at Melloon, in the form of a note or letter of a very unfriendly tone, running in his name; a translation of which appears in the Appendix to the history of the war by Colonel Snodgrass. This paper was in a handwriting recognised by the interpreters, who had been with the Raj Gooroo while in our custody, to be

that of the Burmese officer who accompanied him on his journey into our territory before the war began.

It was a most absurd document to present to the chiefs at Melloon, who had our army before their eyes; and its having been written by the person to whom it was imputed, was quite inconsistent with the statement in the first line of the letter received from Kolein Méngee on the 26th December, that it was the Raj Gooroo's representations which induced him to seek for a conference.

Still enough appeared to satisfy the Commissioners that they had done well not to rely upon the verbal communications of the Raj Gooroo so much as upon the explanatory "purwanna," or order, addressed to him on his release, which, we were afterwards assured by Mr. Price, the King had perused and understood.

This gentleman, a member of the American Baptist Mission, appeared in our camp at the end of our sixth march from Patanagoh, on the 31st of January. Upon this date our negotiations were resumed, to be carried on with all the

additional facility arising from our having to communicate with a man of education and intelligence.

Mr. Price commenced by telling us, that though it would be inconsistent with Burmese policy, and derogatory to the pride of the King, that he should personally appear to solicit peace, yet that, in point of fact, he was sent by the King; and he appealed to Dr. Sandford, of the Royals, a prisoner of war released on his parole, to confirm what he said.

He further said that the chief priest had urged the King to seek for peace, and that the ministers had then begged that he (Mr. Price) would undertake the task of mediation; to which he had assented, on their giving him Dr. Sandford for a companion. The Burmese ministers objected to let that officer go on his mere promise to return, but at last consented upon being told that the word of honour of an English officer was the strongest of all securities. Mr. Price then proceeded, in the terms of his mission, to make a series of extravagant proposals, to which it was evident that he himself did not expect us to

accede. At last he was distinctly told that one-quarter of our whole demand, that is, 250,000*l.*, must now be paid down before we could retire. He prayed for a reduction of this demand, chiefly on the score of humanity, but admitted that the King, or the Queen, or perhaps her brothers, could pay the amount from their own private funds. He knew, however, that they would not pay, and that the whole sum would be wrung from the wretched people. Mr. Price was then told that, of the twenty-five lacs of rupees (250,000*l.*), fifteen must be paid in ten days, and the remainder in five days more; and that the British army would not advance beyond Pagahm before the expiration of that period.

He was also furnished with copies of the treaty concluded at Melloon, and was requested to explain to the proper authorities that no Burmese force would be allowed to retain a position on the east or west bank of the river, between the place where we were encamped and Pagahm.

Mr. Price informed us that the memory of the Muha Bundoola was execrated by both King and people, for having drawn them into a war with

the English ; and that in consequence of this state of feeling, the brothers of that chieftain had been put to death, and the property of the family confiscated.

Mr. Price, at his departure with Dr. Sandford, who accompanied him, according to his parole, assured us that in case the King accepted our terms, he would return to our camp on or before the 12th of February.

Before that day arrived, the Burmese military power made one more convulsive effort to stave off the humiliation of the monarchy. A chieftain had actually the temerity, or the devotion, to volunteer, if put in command of what remained of an armed force, to meet the British army at Pagahm, and try to arrest its advance.

Our information of what was preparing was at that moment so defective, that if this chief had acted with the desperation suiting his perilous position, it is not at all improbable that he might have killed or captured the whole Commission, which, as the Commander of the forces was included in it, might have proved embarrassing.

A portion of the army was some marches in the rear, escorting provisions, and only 900 Europeans and as many sepoys formed the force with which we approached to Pagahm. Even of this body, the greater part were a mile or two behind, as Sir A. Campbell, accompanied by Mr. Mangles and myself, drew near, on the 9th of February, to the ruins surrounding the village into which what was once the capital of the empire has dwindled.

There were with us at the moment, to the best of my recollection, only fifty men of H. M.'s 13th Light Infantry, a very few troopers of the Governor-General's body guard, and a troop of horse artillery. I was riding with Captain Lumsden, who commanded this troop, when we both observed a figure, which we took for a statue, standing on a projecting part of one of the many crumbling pagodas that cover the plain. Suddenly, we perceived that the supposed statue had vanished, on which Captain Lumsden, saying, "We shall hear more of this directly," gave some order to his men, and in a minute or two afterwards a firing began from among the thickets in

front ; but it must have been aimed at the skies, for not a single man or horse was hit.

The space between the various ruined pagodas, of which there are many hundreds, was filled up with very high and thick thorny bushes, and into the midst of these Sir A. Campbell, attended by only an "Aide-de-camp or two, I believe, pushed on till he suddenly came upon about 300 of the enemy's pony cavalry, and was for a few minutes in great personal danger. Happily, seven troopers of the body guard groping their way through the bushes, had stumbled upon the General, and, acting under his immediate orders, contrived to hold the hostile cavalry in check, till the troops in the rear coming up, soon set the whole force in their front to flight.

The following description of the death of the unhappy man who so narrowly missed a great fortune on this occasion, is extracted from Captain Trant's lively narrative of the whole campaign.

"He was instantly hurried forth, and whilst on his way to the place of execution, suffered

every indignity which the infuriated guards could inflict. Yet even at this awful moment, a fine sentiment of loyalty burst from him ; for when on the point of losing sight of the imperial palace, he suddenly turned round, and inclining his head said, ‘ Let me make one parting obeisance to the residence of my sovereign.’ A few moments more terminated his existence ; he was ‘ thrown under the feet of horses and elephants, and trampled to death. Thus were rewarded the brave though unavailing exertions of the only individual in the empire who, in its most critical hour of danger, had courage to step forward in his country’s defence ; and whatever, therefore, may have been the faults of such a man, we cannot but feel regret that the only crime for which he suffered, was his having displayed a patriotic devotion to his country, at a time when, with very few exceptions, every other courtier had abandoned it to the encroachments of a victorious enemy.” \*

Three days after this concluding skirmish Mr. Price again appeared. The King, he told

\* “Two Years in Ava,” p. 387.



us, had been much exasperated at finding that our terms, in regard to the instalments of the money payment, had risen since the conference at Melloon; and that he had himself been in consequence in disgrace, until the event of the skirmish at Pagahm became known, and then he had again been sent for, and directed to hasten to our camp with the ratified treaty, and the offer of six lacs, to be paid down, and a promise of the remainder to be paid on our going back to Prome. He added, that the King and his courtiers could not believe that if they paid at once the whole sum demanded, we would keep our word and retire. He was answered, that we could not abate a fraction of our demand, or delay a single hour in our advance to the capital if it were not complied with.

Mr. Price then repeated, that the Burmese could not bring themselves to put faith in our assurances, and that their debates were carried on in this manner:—One counsellor said, “Let us pay the foreigners the money which they ask for, since we cannot cope with them in the field.” Another objected, “They cannot be such fools as

to mean what they say; they will receive whatever payment we may make in the first instance, and then, like wise men, advance and take the capital, and whatever treasure we may have left."

When it was remarked that the Burmese, in trying to detain us where we were, probably were only seeking to gain time to organize means of further resistance, Mr. Price assured us that there was no longer any hope or intention of deceiving us.

"Yesterday," he said, "I was called at break of day to the house of Kheewon, one of the Privy Counsellors, and found him in great agitation at the news of your victory at Pagahm. Directly I entered his apartments he said, 'Eighteen lacs and three-fourths of tickals is an enormous sum of money;—I dare not propose it to the King to pay it. Are you certain that the English will not be satisfied with a smaller sum?' I replied, that I thought you fully determined to adhere to your ultimatum. He said, 'You are certainly imposing upon us. The English must, I fear, have coaxed or bribed you; but bear in mind, that you, as well as your wife and children, are in our power, and that we can put you to death.

Go down and try if they will not accept six lacs, two more than they asked for at Melloon, and retire to Prome.'” After further details of what was passing at the capital, Mr. Price said, “The Court of Ava does not, it is true, place any confidence in your sincerity, but they are an uncivilized people, children comparatively in knowledge, and it cannot be expected, unacquainted as they have been until very lately with the European character, that they should believe you to be capable of acting in a manner diametrically opposite to that line of conduct which they would adopt if placed in a similar situation.”

It was then explained to Mr. Price, that the army would continue to advance until all the British prisoners, Native and European, as well as Mr. and Mrs. Judson and their child, together with the stipulated sum of money, should be sent down.

Next morning Mr. Price returned to Ava, towards which point the army resumed its march. On the 18th of February he again presented himself, accompanied by his brother missionary, Mr. Judson.

They had both been made members of a Commission to treat with us for peace, and had come down with three or four prisoners and six lacs of tickals, which they were instructed to beg us to accept, and halt wherever we were, until the remaining prisoners and the balance of the money could be sent. • They brought a letter from some of the ministers at Ava, and were accompanied by several Burmese officers, deputed apparently to watch their conduct.

After we had talked for some time with Messrs. Price and Judson, their Burmese companions began to take part in the conversation, their great object being to persuade us to receive the prisoners whom they had brought down, accept the money tendered, and consent to halt for ten days where we were. Their first request was complied with; the two last were positively rejected; and they were told that, if within five days from sunset of that day, the 18th of February, the ratified treaty should not be sent, and all of its immediate conditions executed, the British Commissioners would consider themselves at liberty to alter the terms, in whatever manner

and to whatever extent might seem meet to themselves.

Our camp was again in motion, and on the 23d of February reached Yandaboo, where we were met by two Burmese nobles with long names, the accredited plenipotentiaries on the part of the King of Ava, attended by Mr. Judson as interpreter. To prevent any future misapprehension, the several articles of the treaty were explained to the new plenipotentiaries by Mr. Judson in our presence. A long and tedious dialogue on the manner of carrying the treaty, in all its details, into execution then took place, but the ceremony of signing and sealing was postponed until the ensuing day.

On the 24th of February the Commissioners on both sides assembled, and the treaty was duly signed and sealed, the Burmese ministers affixing as their signet the impression of a peacock. This event was announced to the army by a royal salute, and immediately afterwards the chiefs were led out to witness a review of some of our troops. Sir A. Campbell conducted one of the plenipotentiaries, and it fell to my lot to

give my arm to the other, as one would do to a lady ; and certainly never did any lady tremble more than my Burmese charge. I felt his whole frame quiver as he leaned on my arm, a proof of the reality of his alarm arising out of that childish ignorance alluded to by Mr. Price, which ought always to be borne in mind, and duly allowed for, by those who have important matters to settle with demi-barbarians like the people of Ava.

Having kept no memoranda at the time, I fear that my narrative of what passed at Yandaboo, supplied by memory alone, would be so meagre, that I feel bound to refer my readers to the 15th and 16th chapters of my lamented friend Captain Trant's work, for a clear and amusing description of all that occurred from the time of our reaching Pagahm to the moment of our embarking to return to Rangoon. They will there find a most picturesque description of the ruins at Pagahm, and of the really beautiful pagoda, called the Shoezèegoon, built in the form of a cross, the outside adorned with images, griffins, sphinxes, and monsters ; the inner walls, with curious frescoes, not devoid of artistic merit,

and with colours undimmed by years. The arrival of the prisoners, and all the circumstances of the meeting at Yandaboo, are described with accuracy and spirit; but I can only make a single extract, though that is one of sufficient interest, I trust, to induce those who may peruse it, to turn to the "Two Years in Ava," from which it is taken.

"We had not been encamped long, when a war-boat was observed rounding a point some distance up the river, and, on its nearer approach, we discovered that it contained Dr. Price, who informed Sir A. Campbell that he was accompanied by Mrs. Judson and two other prisoners. Twenty-five lacs of rupees (250,000*l.*) were in the war-boats which followed him; and the premier Woonghee, lord of Laykaing, and Attweyn-woon Shwagnin, had been sent with full powers by the King to concede every point we demanded, but being doubtful how we should act after receiving the money and prisoners, had remained at Yeppandine, twenty miles in the rear. Seven large war-boats, with a well-armed crew, contained the treasure; and a part of the beach was

instantly appropriated for them, under charge of a guard, to prevent the obtrusive curiosity of our army. A couple of tents were pitched for the reception of the Burman chieftains, when they should arrive, and another for Mr. and Mrs. Judson, who, shortly afterwards, we felt unfeigned pleasure in hearing had landed from the boats. Mrs. Judson's health had of late been very bad, and the sufferings, mental and bodily, to which that amiable and interesting woman had been exposed during the confinement of her husband were so great, that it is almost impossible to believe her fragile form could resist such accumulated distress. Her personal liberty was not restrained, and she availed herself of it to make repeated and unavailing efforts for the enlargement of her husband; but her solicitations were constantly refused, and she was even debarred from seeing him. As the nourishment of the prisoners depended solely on the exertions of their friends, she supplied Mr. Judson with food, and occasionally contrived to communicate with him by hiding a slip of paper in the spout of a teapot;



and at one period, the prisoners having been moved to a place of confinement several miles from Ava, she followed, and took up her abode in a miserable hut, where, to escape insult, she assumed the Burmese attire. A more dreadful situation for a woman of feeling and education to be placed in cannot well be imagined. She possessed not a single friend to whom she might look for assistance and support; she had no home to inhabit; her daily food was of the coarsest description; and, to increase her cares, Mr. Judson's life she knew to be in the power of a cruel and sanguinary court; yet still her strong mind and good sense enabled her to make head against her adversities, until an addition was made to her cares by the birth of her little infant, when she became so dangerously ill, that Dr. Price, on being released from prison, found her perfectly senseless, but, by timely restoratives and judicious treatment, succeeded in causing an alteration for the better in her health. Mrs. Judson's talents are already known to the public by the publication of her clever 'Letters from Burmah;' and it is a delightful task now to

mention these few amongst numerous traits of benevolence, constancy, and fortitude, which embellished the mind of a lady whose unfortunate situation during the last two years has been so much the subject of regret." \*

We left Yandaboo in the course of the first week in March, and on our way down the river received a very friendly communication from the Rown Rown, or Commander, of our ally the King of Siam's army, intimating his readiness to advance to our aid, on our promising to place the province of Martaban and its dependencies at his disposal. The reply to this was a simple recital of all that had been done by the unassisted British force, and a recommendation to our correspondent to remain where he was, if within his own king's territory, or to withdraw, if he had overstepped its limits.

The last meeting of the Commission took place at Rangoon, on the 27th of March, when we were joined by Mr. John Cranford, a gentleman well known by his learned works on the

\* "Two Years in Ava," p. 395.

Eastern Archipelago, who had been appointed on the renewal of hostilities at Melloon, when it was thought that the other members of the Commission might be indefinitely detained in Upper Ava, to the civil charge of the lower provinces of Prome and Pegu. At this meeting, Mr. Price appeared, on the part of the King of Ava, to prefer his last request for a modification of the terms of peace, by begging, that of the remaining moiety of the half million to be paid previously to the evacuation of Rangoon, a sum nearly equal to half might be accepted at once, and that the payment of the balance might not be exacted for another year. The request was referred for the consideration of Government. What the decision was I cannot remember, but it is well known that the Burmese faithfully kept their word as to the payment, not only of this sum, but also of the remaining half million which did not become due till a year after our forces were withdrawn from their country.

In the course of this conference, Mr. Price thus expressed himself:—

“ I think that I may say that the Court

of Ava has received so severe a lesson in the field, and, by the punctual observance of the terms of the treaty, has acquired such confidence in your good faith and sincerity, that it will never again involve itself with the British Government."



### PART III.—CONCLUSION.

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REMARKS ON THE OCCUPATION OF PEGU AND PROME, RECORDED  
AT RANGOON, ON MARCH 28, 1826.—REFLECTIONS ON THE  
ORIGIN, CONDUCT, AND CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST BURMESE  
WAR, AND SUGGESTIONS REGARDING OUR FUTURE RELATIONS  
WITH THE COUNTRIES TO THE EAST OF THE YEOMADONG  
MOUNTAINS.



## P A R T   III.

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### CONCLUSION.

HERE, at the end of my narrative, may best be inserted some passages taken from a document once official, but now become historical, since it is of a date three years anterior to that of another paper lately so designated\* by the Prime Minister himself.

The document in question is a minute which I recorded on the proceedings of the Commission, before it broke up, at Rangoon, on the 28th March, 1826. The point therein discussed now again occupies public attention; therefore it may not be uninteresting to some of my readers to see what was said and thought upon the subject a quarter of a century ago. A differ-

\* See Earl of Aberdeen's speech in reply to Earl of Ellenborough, as reported in the *Times* of Friday, Feb. 25, 1859.



ence of opinion then, as now, prevailed upon the policy of annexing the provinces of Pegu and Prome to the territories of the Honourable Company; and that was the main reason assigned for recording a retrospective review of the whole question, in a form to admit of its reasoning being either confirmed or refuted by the comments of my colleagues.\*

As regarded our obligations to the people of Pegu, it was argued that they served us for money, and for nothing else; doing no more than was done by the people of Pagahm and other places above Prome, to whom no one imagined any obligation to have been contracted: supplies and service were to be purchased at Pagahm, as at Rangoon; and without purchase, were as little procurable at one place as at the other:—that the lower orders had little to apprehend from the vengeance of their rulers, beyond the loss of some part of their earnings with us. I had met with one proof, in what passed on my

\* These men were Sir A. Campbell, and Mr. John Crauford, who had been sent down as third member on the rupture of the truce at Melloon.

discharging, at Yendaboo, a body of Coolies attached to my own establishment, who had been engaged at Prome, but turned out to be natives of villages to the east of the capital. To the query, whether they were not afraid to go back after having been so long with our camp, they laughingly replied by making a sign as of passing money from one hand to another; as much as to say, "Give us what you promised, and we will pay our way out of our difficulties." Among those of higher grade, the individuals who had evinced any zeal in our cause were very few; and of these, it appeared, from papers found at Melloon, that two of the most influential had a secret understanding with the Court of Ava, and would have acted against us, if an opportunity had presented itself.

Our popularity, it was observed, might be ascribed to our liberal payments, and to the absence of taxation; and would not, perhaps, survive the change that must ensue when revenue came to be sought for.

The following description of the meditated boundary line, if Pegu and Prome had been

annexed, will probably apply to the face of the country in 1853, as well as in 1826.

“ From the Arracan Mountains to the Irrawaddy, at Prome, a distance of about thirty miles—the country is covered with jungle, and presents every facility for incursions. Along this track the enemy advanced, past Prome, in November last, to Padown; and through it, when baffled in their attack upon that post, they retired. From Prome to Tongoo, a distance of about 100 miles, the country is hilly and jungly, perhaps impervious to our troops; and on that account, probably favourable to the operations of such an enemy as the Burmese. Of the country beyond Tongoo, to the eastward, I have seen no particular description; but that it should present any obstacle to a Burmese force, I conceive to be improbable from what I know of the routes by which the Bundoola's force advanced in 1824, to Ramoo, and returned at the most inclement season of the year to the Irrawaddy. Supposing, therefore, our troops to be cantoned upon the contemplated frontier,—one division at Tongoo, and the other at Prome, with such

intermediate posts as the nature of the country might admit of,—are we warranted in supposing that such a distribution of our force would prove so imposing as to deter the Burmese from attempting to pass the boundary line, to plunder our villages to the southward? Deprived, as the monarch and his Court would be, of their revenues, and cut off in common with their subjects from many articles, not only of luxury, but of ordinary consumption, privation would combine with the hope of plunder, to dispose the rulers to determine upon a system of marauding warfare, which, under such circumstances, the people of the upper provinces would furnish the means of carrying on. Such a war, reviving for many years with each successive season, would have been attended with this striking peculiarity,—that although its object on our part might be strictly defensive, yet on every occasion of their coming in contact with the enemy, our troops would invariably have been the assailants.

“Now, contemptible warriors as the Burmese may be, experience has proved that it is only by

the very best troops in our service that they can be promptly driven from such stockaded intrenchments as they can in the course of a day construct; and then not without a loss of life, such as it is melancholy to contrast with the object for which it is sacrificed.

“Deficient as the Burmese are in enterprise, and inferior to many Asiatics in active courage, they appear to surpass any race of men whom we have encountered in India, in that persevering obstinacy of character, which is, of all national qualities, the most likely to render their complete subjugation difficult. They may shrink from a contest when sensible of their immediate inferiority; but this will not prevent the very same men resisting, where they may from any cause conceive the disparity to be removed. The checks which our arms have occasionally sustained, have been coincident with the most triumphant successes; and no victory obtained in any one quarter has led to submission in another, where we wanted the means to enforce it. The movement of our army upon the capital, ~~did not~~ prevent a serious resistance being

opposed to us in the direction of Pegu; and it may be questioned, whether the occupation of Ava would have been followed by the surrender of a single stockade, against which we might not have the means of bringing a completely adequate force.

“I conceive, therefore, that for the defence of such a frontier as I have endeavoured to describe, and the maintenance of internal tranquillity, six European regiments and a strong native force, of such a description as might be procurable, would be absolutely necessary. Whether or not we might prevail on a people, singularly averse to the trammels of regular service, to enlist as Sepoys, seems dubious. The Taleins may possess many soldier-like qualities, but they are not to be found in any number near the frontier; and through the country are so blended by intermarriage and gradual amalgamation with the Burmese, that, as a separate and distinct race, it would be premature, in the present state of our information regarding them, to calculate upon the extent of the assistance they might render us.”

After some remarks on the difficulty of bringing our best Native Indian troops into a country not forming part of Hindoo land, it is asked,—

“ Were we then to have drilled, disciplined, and armed the Burmese of the Southern, to repel the Burmese of the Northern provinces? Because it has succeeded in Hindostan, are we certain that the experiment of placing arms in the hands of the very people whose countrymen we are to subjugate, would succeed in Pegu? ” \*

The reflections which, in 1826, were suggested by a review of what might have happened, may now perhaps be found to have some bearing upon what is actually going on, and they led to a conclusion as applicable to the present state of things as to the past,—that the conquest of the whole Empire of Ava was a more feasible mea-

\* In the autumn of 1839 the author visited the Tennaserim coast, and there saw the local battalion called the Talein corps. It looked well on parade, but lacked cohesion. Only one half of the men could be persuaded to live in the lines, the other half resided in the town with their families. It was impossible to detach a company on separate duty. It may have improved since, but it does not appear to have been actively employed in any of our operations in Pegu.

sure than the separate retention of Pegu and Prome ; because, “ upon the plains of Upper Ava, European science and discipline would produce their full effect ; while, by retaining the capital, the inhabitants of the intermediate villages, who, in the event of our retrograding, would be compelled to act against us as enemies, might be conciliated and brought to aid us as friends.”

There is a peculiarity in our relations with the Burmese, which, of all our Indian rulers, the Marquis of Hastings alone seems clearly to have discerned. That people does not form part of the great Indian family of nations. What passes among them, does not enter into the bill of fare served up to native quidnuncs. Little or nothing of it would be known to Indian durbars, if it were not forced upon their notice by our own indiscreet disclosures. The Burmese are, as Mr. Price said, children in knowledge, and it would be well if we were to treat them as such, and not to allow every burst of petulance on their part to hurry us into wars to be waged at the cost of the poor people of India. Many



have been the strictures on the treaty of Yenda-boo, but none have touched the real blot in that instrument; namely, the article providing for the mutual reception of envoys, or political residents. Its insertion was indeed a blunder, and the more extraordinary, because the Governor-General, Lord Amherst, could, from his own experience in China, judge how unlikely such an arrangement was to work smoothly in the kindred country of Ava.

In fact, the measure is so repulsive to all the Indo-Chinese nations, that the strongest proof of Sir James Brooke's personal influence among them, is the present king of Siam's expression of a wish to receive him, if it be only as a visitor in that generally obnoxious capacity.

The wisest thing for us to have done, would have been to have allowed the article to become a dead letter, and to have let all of our communications with the Burmese pass through the medium of the commissioner in the Tennasserim provinces, who is peculiarly well posted for conducting them with dignity and ease. But, even as it was, if we had held our tongues, our

envoy's rude reception at Ava in 1839 would have caused no sensation in any native circle in India. We, we ourselves, give a factitious importance to Burmese surliness, and then cry out that the dignity of the British Government will suffer in the eyes of the natives, if the injury, of which they know nothing, be not avenged by a war for which they must pay.

The only injury to require any exhibition of retaliatory power on our part, is an invasion of our territory, because that can be felt and understood throughout India. For this reason it is that the first Burmese war seems to me to have been just, necessary and unavoidable, though it was stigmatized at the time, and by the same class as has since ever been most clamorous for a renewal of hostilities, as a "guilty blunder;" and that amiable nobleman, Lord Amherst, was reviled, as if he had wantonly sent forth an ill-planned piratical expedition to sack Rangoon. It has been shown that this expedition reached its destination precisely when it was ~~wanted~~ to stay the progress of a counter operation against ourselves. It cannot therefore be ~~said~~ to have

been ill-timed; and although chance had more to do than design with the result, it may be questioned whether the detention of our army at Rangoon had not on the whole a beneficial effect. Had we rushed up to Ava with buccaneering rapidity, our successes would have been unputed to surprise, whereas the eight months' halt at Rangoon gave the Burmese time to send army after army to be shattered against our position, and thus slowly to imbibe the lesson of their own inferiority, which no single defeat, however signal, could have taught them.

The real errors of the Government of that period arose out of the besetting sin of the Calcutta Council Chamber; namely, the tendency to despise an untried foe, which has so often rendered the commencement of an Indian war disastrous. In December, 1823, the Burmese were talked of with contempt, and it was believed that a company of our sepoy would set a host of them to flight. Even after juster views began to prevail, and an expedition to Rangoon was thought of, this was meditated on so small a scale, that the commissariat was not, in the

first instance, desired to make provision for the subsistence of much more than a single battalion.

This delusion was dispelled before the troops sailed, but it lasted long enough to affect the quality of the provisions sent, by delaying the salting and corning of meat till the hot season was actually setting in.

Another consequence of the prevailing error was the disregard of every warning about the enemy's force in Arracan; that force described in Captain Trant's pages as "composed\* of well armed and experienced soldiers, who had been some time embodied, whereas those at first opposed to Sir A. Campbell were fresh levies from the district south of Prome."

The third and most enduring evil resulting from the contemptuous estimate at first formed of the Burmese power, was that, in the hurry of after preparations, enormous freights were paid for shipping. The immediate cost thus incurred was but a small part of the mischief; the worst effect of this profusion being that it created and

\* "Two Years in Ava," p. 67.

spread through the mercantile circles of India a craving for war as a source of gain. Well might Kolein Ménégee express his amazement at the rates paid. When the treaty at Melloon was signed, the monthly expenditure, on account of transports alone, was seven lacs of rupees, or 70,000*l*.

No wonder that fortunes were thus made, and bankruptcies averted. No wonder that the ship-owners and merchants of Calcutta have ever since been the most strenuous advocates of every measure giving promise of a renewal of such profitable hostilities.

Having touched upon what appear to have been the mistakes attending the commencement, we may consider the conduct and conclusion of the war.

In the former few errors can be detected, but such as are inseparable from all warlike operations in a wild and unexplored country. The Arracan army was too large, and the attempt to penetrate through Kachar and Munnipore had better have been left alone; but the main movement, on the Irrawaddy, was, on the whole, admirably managed.

Sir A. Campbell's march from Rangoon to Prome was as bold and hardy an advance as ever was ventured on by a British general. Wasted as the force was by disease, and so scantily equipped that one quadruped, pony, ox, or buffalo, was all the carriage allotted to each officer, it required great resolution to plunge into a country filled with difficulties, and great skill to conduct an army through.

It remains only to review the political proceedings. These, as they ended in peace, have of course been lavishly abused. But let the actual state of things at the moment be fairly taken into account.

The British army, though counting seven Royal regiments in its ranks, and one of these a recent accession, the 87th Foot, about 700 strong, could only muster 2,000 Europeans, and less than twice as many Madras sepoy, when it moved off towards Ava, after the rupture of the truce at Melloon, on the 25th of January, 1826. When it halted at Yendaboo, on the 23d of February, it was nearly 300 miles from Prome, and about twice that distance from ~~the river~~. The

communication with Prome was kept up by a chain of posts, at intervals of fifty miles, along the river. At each of these posts a single battalion of Madras Native Infantry and a small armed vessel were stationed. As the rains advanced, and the usual inundation ensued, these posts would have been quite insulated, and might, if our army had remained in mere military possession of the capital, have been attacked in detail, and destroyed, as the detachment at Ramoo had been.

The main body of the army would then have been left at a distance of 600 miles from the sea, with its line of communication endangered, if not cut off. This awkward position could only have been escaped from by an abandonment of the capital, and a retreat that would have effaced all the moral effect of the advance.

There are writers who even now maintain that our halt at Yendaboo, although in conformity with a treaty notoriously wrung out of their reluctant monarch and his court, was imputed by the people of Ava to our fears. Would ~~not~~ a retreat from Ava, without a

treaty, or other acknowledgment of our superiority, have been with more show of truth ascribed to the same cause? Yet we must have so retired, if, after doing our worst, and taking the capital, the king had withdrawn beyond our reach towards the confines of China, and refused to humble himself by imploring for terms from those whose means of menace would have been then exhausted.\*

A city is easily removed or rebuilt in those regions, and we have no right to assume that the occupation of Ava would have told upon the Burmese, as that of a more substantial and stately capital would tell upon a more civilized people. The Burmese were so little awed by our advance from Prome, that at so late a date as the 11th of January, we had two officers killed and five wounded, and eighty men killed and wounded, in attacking a stockade at Sitang,

\* "When Mr. Price last left Ava, the queen was urging the king to retire to Mouchaboo, about forty miles to the north of Ava; boats and carts were in readiness for a move, many of the inhabitants had fled, and the royal family were preparing to follow."—*Two Years in Ava*, pp. 375, 390.



in Pegu, whence a regiment of Madras Native Infantry had, a few days before, been repulsed, with the loss of its Colonel and another officer killed, and three officers wounded.

While such was the spirit of resistance in the province left behind, and where the enemy had witnessed the most striking proofs of our power, what grounds were there for concluding that the mere occupation of the town of Ava, the king still holding out in the interior, would have caused the remote provinces, where we were less known, to submit to our sway? \*

But it is almost certain that the capture of the capital would have at least postponed peace, and so continued a ruinous monthly disbursement of £150,000 on account of *extra expenses*

\* This reasoning applies to a mere water movement, such as General Godwin has been blamed for not undertaking. China and Ava differ in this, that the one has and the other has not large and splendid cities to lose. The great difficulty in Ava is to find anything palpable at which to direct a blow. Had General Godwin steamed up to Ava, he must, in all probability, have returned without obtaining any concession from the receding court, while he would not have had the means of following to any distance more than miles from his boats.

*only,\** which, it will be seen from the statement given in the Appendix, was then going on.

To stop this fearful waste was in itself a sufficient motive for feeling satisfied with a peace which gave us a salubrious, though not a profitable province along the Tennasserim coast, where European troops\* could be safely cantoned in a position to hold the Burmese in continual check, and so thoroughly completed our boundary by the addition of Assam and Arracan to our possessions, that our frontier has ever since been secure from even a semblance of insult.

The treaty of Yendaboo also inflicted a deep humiliation upon the delinquent monarch, by making him pay down a quarter of a million in bullion, in the shape of golden goblets, chains, and other articles of luxury, beside exacting a promise, which he faithfully fulfilled, of a further payment of another quarter on the evacuation of Rangoon, and of half a million within two years.

\* The reader will find statements of the expenditure of money, health, and life, during the war, in the Appendix, Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Any one who had seen our paymaster standing like Brennus before a rude pair of scales, and receiving, by weight alone, costly trinkets of really beautiful workmanship, would have felt that the vanquished were humbled to the utmost that a civilized and Christian power could desire, and would wonder, after the lapse of six-and-twenty years, to find enlightened editors lamenting that the victors were not more stern, and the conditions imposed more grinding. The assertion will be hooted at, but it may be maintained, that the Burmese have made good Mr. Price's prediction in 1826, that they would never again seek a rupture with the British. No subsequent preparation on their part has ever evinced a consciousness of anything having been done to provoke a war.

Their want of courtesy to our envoy in 1839, they would justify by appealing to the treaty; the wording of the Burmese version, owing to our ignorance of the language, merely binding them to receive "an officer and fifty men," but not an ~~envoy~~ according to our notions.

Rudeness have been, and even brutal, towards

strangers sojourning in their land, but so are all the nations to the east of the Ganges ; and we may war on to the Yellow Sea, if we are to have no peace but with the polite. Remote as this limit may seem, it is that set to our progress in the speculations of the ardent. When our Afghan entanglements were beginning in 1839, a zealous advocate of war with Ava, on being told that the Indus and the Irrawaddy might serve for a while as the extreme outlines of our dominion, exclaimed, "The Irrawaddy! Nonsense—the Yellow Sea is our destined boundary!" The gentleman who uttered this was no visionary, but an active, energetic civil functionary, and his words only embody a thought familiar to the mind of many a merchant and many a missionary, and leavening the lucubrations of many an editor.

The best corrective of these daring day-dreams of progressive and over-zealous men, may be found in the cautious suggestions of the young but yet experienced officer from whose pages so much has been already cited.

Treating of territorial extension, Captain Trent

remarks, that it weakens our power, "by placing us in contact with various nations of different manners and customs to our own, constantly involving us in fresh disputes and wars, in which our only mode of obtaining redress is by again seizing more territory. In this manner British India will continue accumulating, until at last the enormous fabric falls with a sudden crash." \*

Though the preceding were the words of one of those whose mission it seems to be to prove that wisdom stands not in the multitude of years, still, as relating to a question of general policy, it may not command the assent which can hardly be denied to the professional opinion of an officer who had seen more of the war than perhaps any individual in camp, that if Pegu were to be retained, the Burmahs refusing to enter into terms, "we should have been obliged to keep a large *European* force at Prome and Tongho." †

The obligation will now be found to be as great, as it appeared to Captain Trant in 1826, with this difference, that India is now less able

\* "Thirty Years in Ava," p. 411.

† Ibid. p. 413.

than it was to spare any portion of the European force allotted for its own defence. If troops be not furnished from England for the duty, the occupation of Pegu may prove the source of disasters in other quarters by weakening that part of our army upon the sufficiency of which the stability of our empire more and more depends.

It must in candour be acknowledged that, in the present day, many able and highly instructed men make light of the perils of territorial extension; but it ought to be borne in mind that the same men, or at least men of the same school, made light of the dangers menacing our position in Afghanistan, during the two years of seeming success in that quarter. To find, therefore, that the same individuals approve of the new practice of confiding the business of negotiation to those who cannot possibly know anything of the character, language, or manners of the people to be treated with, does not entirely vindicate the innovation. The word and blow diplomacy of such agents has a show of valour to win the applause of the more ardent war-

shippers of progress; but it is not the diplomacy of Barry Close, Malcolm, Elphinstone, or Metcalfe, in earlier days; or of George Clerk and Sutherland, who kept the Punjab and Rajpootana quiet and friendly, during a more recent season of disaster, when the hostility of those states would have worked our ruin. These able men studied, not only the language, but the literature of the people over whose councils they sought to obtain a sway; and the courtesy of their demeanour, even when their measures were unavoidably distasteful, often enabled them to carry by moral influence what mere menace would not have effected.

If, however, the system under which our empire has risen and thriven, is to be discarded in our dealings with the Ultra Gangetic nations, would it not be better that the Crown should take all the countries east of the Yeomadong Mountains, and form of them another colonial dependency like Ceylon?

The cost of the war now in progress, and of other wars looming in the distance, would then fall, as it ought to do, on the people of Great

Britain, and not on the natives of India ; but other advantages would also result from such an arrangement.

A Royal Presidency on the eastern shores of the Bay of Bengal might give an impulse to the cause of good government, similar to that which agriculture would receive from the establishment of an experimental farm ; and the exhibition of a model administration would do more to improve the Indian Civil Service, than all the vituperation of the eloquent noblemen, editors, and statesmen, by whom it has lately been assailed.

No risk of anything more serious than a little mortification would attend the experiment, for the East India Company's empire, if left to itself, would still be at hand, and ready, on an emergency, to supply Ava, as it has supplied Ceylon, with an able Governor to set its affairs in order.

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## APPENDIX.



## APPENDIX.

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[No. 1.—p. 125.]

*Description of a Route from Arracan to the Irrawaddy River, given by a Mug named Oughee, viâ Talak.*

MY party consisted of fifteen men, and we carried a quantity of the blue bird's feathers with us for sale. We left Arracan by water, and got to Talak in two days and nights, or five tides. For three miles from Talak, where there is a fort or stockade, the road is through jungle, over level ground, after which it ascends the hills. The first ascent is very steep, but the road is very good, being wide and smooth, though winding and zig-zag. It takes one whole puhur, or three hours, to get to the top of the ascent, at a short distance beyond which is the first halting-place, on a clear and open spot, near which, however, there is no village. It is called Phoongree Chakheia.

2d. This march is through a bamboo thicket, and

all along the road gradually declines to the halting-place, on an open but uninhabited spot, called Khova Chooubha Khein. There are numerous rivulets, but no nullas to be met with.

3d. The road for this march runs up and down many considerable elevations, but there is no very steep pass to be surmounted. Towards the end of the journey it descends to a little nulla, on the bank of which is the halting-place, called the Hryne Chakhein, which is totally uninhabited. There is bamboo jungle all the way; the road is excellent, and fully twenty feet wide.

4th. This stage begins with a steep ascent, which is accomplished in four ghurries, or more than an English hour, after which, though less difficult than at first, it runs up a continued acclivity to the halting-place on its summit, which is reached by the afternoon. It is called Ya Brang Chakhein, and is uninhabited. There is a bamboo jungle all the way, but little or no forest.

5th. This march is through a high tree jungle, over irregular and undulating ground, but with no steep rise or descent. It ends by the afternoon at an uninhabited spot, called Thyn-Ta Bung Chakhein.

6th. Till noon the road, though not steep, is up afterwards declines to the halting-place, where there is no village. Its name is Mrung Chakhein. There is a high tree jungle all the way,

and this march terminates the passage of the Yeomadung range of hills.

7th. The road during this stage is all the way on the descent, till it reaches a valley called Phaeen, where there are several villages, some with only three or four houses, others with as many as sixty, situated at about two miles from the base of the hills. There is cultivation all round them, and the jungle throughout the march is comparatively light. There is a nulla near the village, and it is fordable, though the water is waist deep.

8th. The road, immediately after leaving the village, ascends a mountain called Whaeen Tong. The ascent is performed in about one puhur, or three hours, after which the road declines to a place in the plain called Noon Kheone, which is reached by evening. There are several villages at this place, situated at about one puhur, or three hours' walk, from the foot of the hills. There is light jungle all the way through the hills. There is a nulla near this village, fordable, but waist deep.

9th. This is a short stage, and terminates at the first puhur, or nine A.M., at a large village called Myn Ja Rech Roa, where they halted on account of the extent of jungle in front.

10th. This march is over a stony plain, through jungle, and ends by evening at a town called Myn Mrs. This town contains between two and three

thousand houses. It is surrounded by a brick masonry wall, about seven cubits high. In some places the masonry has decayed, and the gaps are filled with piles of timber. There is no ditch; there are four gates, which are closed at night. On the north there is a large jheel, or piece of water; on the other three sides are open plains. It is governed by a Wynung.

11th. This march is through an open, well inhabited, and cultivated country, and ends by noon at Chung-froo Keine (or Sembew Gheone), on the bank of the Irrawaddy. It is only a village, without any stockade or fortification.

Each man of this party carried eight seers (or sixteen pounds) of rice, which sufficed for his support till he got to Phaen, the 7th stage, where they procured provisions.

Eleven seers would, in their opinion, be enough for one man during the whole journey from Talak to the Irrawaddy.

[No. 2.—p. 235.]

*Statement of the Extra Current Expenses of the Burmese War, about the time when the First Treaty was signed at Melloon.*

## WATER FORCES.

	Per Mensem.
Transports from Rangoon to Arracan . . . . .	700,000
Navy . . . . .	40,000
Flotilla of Honourable Company's Gunboats . . . . .	60,000
Gun Brig's stationed in the Irrawaddy . . . . .	10,000
Flotilla at Arracan and Chittagong . . . . .	10,000
Total . . . . . Rupees	<u>820,000</u>

## LAND FORCES.

MADRAS DIVISION, consisting of five European and fifteen native corps, each creating an additional expense of 10,012, total . . . . .	200,240
Brigadiers, Brigade Staff, and contingencies . . . . .	50,000
Madras Cavalry, at the rate of Two Regiments of Infantry . . . . .	20,024
Madras Artillery, Ordnance, Stores, &c., calculated equal to Two Regiments of Infantry . . . . .	20,024
Medical Staff and Stores . . . . .	25,000
Madras Commissariat, General Staff . . . . .	70,000
Madras Total . . . . Rupees	<u>385,288</u>

BENGAL DIVISION.—Four Regiments of Europeans, extra allowances, calculated upon the same scale as the Madras battalion . . . . . 20,024  
 Body-guard, equal to Three Regiments . . . . . 20,024  
 Horse Artillery and Rockets, equal to Three Regiments . . . . . 20,024



Foot Artillery and Ordnance, equal to those of Madras . . . . .	20,024
Commissariat, including extra rations to the Flotilla . . . . .	100,000
Medical Staff and Stores, on a different principal from those of the Madras Division . . . . .	50,000
Extra Staff and Establishments . . . . .	20,000
Brigadiers and Brigade Staff . . . . .	2,500
Malays, Mugs, and Chinamen . . . . .	8,000
Contingencies, about . . . . .	50,000
Bengal Total . . . . . Rupees	<u>350,624</u>

## GRAND TOTAL.

Water forces . . . . .	820,000
Land ditto . . . . .	735,912
Sum Total . . . . . Rupees	<u>1,555,912</u>

[No. 3.—p. 235.]

*Arracan.*

SPEAKING of the destruction of H.M.'s 44th and 54th Regiments, Colonel Tullock says:—"Thus it appears that, out of a force which did not average above 1,004 men, 595, or three-fifths of the whole, perished in the course of eight months." The condition of the miserable survivors may be inferred from the fact, that when landed at Calcutta and Madras, "the effective strength was scarcely sufficient to form a guard for the colours. . . . Numbers perished during the following year, and the total loss probably

amounted to not less than three-fourths of the original force; and the European Artillery of the Indian army are said to have suffered nearly in the same proportion."—*War Office Statistical Reports.*

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[No. 4.—p. 235.]

"IT seems essential to bring such facts as these prominently to notice, because there is no mode of estimating the severity of military service, except by comparison, and it is of importance that the authorities, with whom rests the ultimate reward of the soldier, should have some means of knowing the risk of life and peril of constitution by which his pension has been earned."—LIEUT.-COL. TUILLOCK.—*Statistical Reports, published by order of Her Majesty.*

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[No. 5.—p. 235.]

"IN the Peninsular Army, under the Duke of Wellington, taking a period of forty-one months, during which the war was carried on with the utmost vigour, an annual mortality of about four per cent. occurred in battle and from wounds, and twelve per cent. was from disease, \* being nearly sixteen per cent.

\* 16

of those employed ;"—whereas, in the first year of the Burmese war, three and a half per cent. of the British troops were killed in action, and forty-five per cent. perished by disease—"making a total loss of forty-eight and a half per cent.—consequently, each person employed throughout that year encountered more risk of life than in three Peninsular Campaigns." In the second year of the Burmese war, the losses in action and by disease were "about one-half of what occurred in the first"—making a total for the two years of five and a quarter per cent. killed in action, and sixty-seven and a half by disease, or a grand total for two years of seventy-two and three quarters per cent. of the European force employed under Sir Archibald Campbell.—*War Office Statistical Reports, published by order of Her Majesty.*

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[No. 6.—p. 235.]

THE records of the War Office exhibit the loss of sixty-one officers by wounds and by disease, of H.M.'s army alone. "A very heavy loss indeed," says Col. Tullock, "considering that the average number of officers present did not exceed one hundred and fifty."—*War Office Statistical Reports, published by order of Her Majesty.*

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